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# THE BETTER LAND;

OR,

The Christian Emigrant's Guide to Heaven.

SHOWING THE NAKEDNESS OF THE LAND OF

SPIRITUAL EGYPT,

THE

PLEASANT JOURNEY THROUGH THIS WILDERNESS,

AND THE

GLORIOUS INHERITANCE

OF

SETTLERS IN THE CELESTIAL CANAAN.

BY

JEREMIAH DODSWORTH.

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REVISED BY THOMAS O. SUMMERS, D.D.

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## Introductory Note.

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THE author of the following work apologizes for the “antique and singular style” in which it is written. This very style, we presume, helped to secure it the great popularity it has gained in England; and in complying with the request to revise it for an American edition, we have been as sparing as may be in the exercise of the editorial prerogative. The author, we believe, is a minister of the Primitive Methodist Connection; but his book contains few things that will not be endorsed by all evangelical Christians: indeed, the last revised edition, of which this is a reprint, went forth with the warm recommendations of Drs. Beaumont, Burns, Campbell, and other distinguished divines of Methodist, Baptist, Congregational, and other Churches, so that it does not need the endorsement of

The Editor.

NASHVILLE, TENN., February 24, 1857.



## Preface.

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THE somewhat antique and singular style in which the following pages are written, was suggested to the mind of the Author by the popular excitement of the age on the subject of EMIGRATION. Surrounded by a population affected with a kind of mania for the "gold regions of California," on the one hand, and by such as were longing to be "off to the diggings of Australia," on the other, he thought it a seasonable opportunity to direct the attention of the restless millions of earth to the GLORY REGIONS of the BETTER LAND. He could have written a graver book on the subject; but his desire was to *win* the affections of his readers to Christ, and, without lowering the tone of evangelical religion, to diffuse the blessings of a cheerful piety. For this purpose he designedly adopted the homely costume in which his thoughts are clothed, hoping that they would be more attractive and profitable to his readers in that dress, than in the fashionable style of literary composition.

As to the arrangement and contents of the work, he has no fears "looming in the future" that he will be suspected of plagiarism; though, where he thought it necessary to confirm his own ideas by quotations from other authors, he has done so, and marked such extracts with the usual literary distinctions. For several anecdotal illustrations he is indebted to Mr. Denton's collection; for many to the Rev. J.

Flesher's "Cyclopædia of Arvine's;" and for one of surpassing interest, "The Prodigal Son," to the pamphlet bearing that title, by the Rev. J. Simpson, who also has rendered his valuable service in assisting to revise the manuscript. For an occasional extract he is under obligation to the author of "Life's Last Hours;" to Drs. Watts, Dick, Clarke, Young, Dwight, Hamilton, and others; to the Rev. W. Cooke, the Rev. W. Jay, and to the illustrious and venerable Wesley. And as far as he deemed it consistent with the claim of originality for his work, he has enriched its pages with the best thoughts of wise and good men.

It has been the constant endeavor of the Author to secure the salvation of his readers—"to allure to brighter worlds, and lead the way;" and should one wandering prodigal son of Heaven be persuaded to return to his home in the skies by the perusal of this book, he will gratefully ascribe the glory to God, and bless him for such an ample recompense. And if, by the grace of God, he should find his own eternal destiny among the happy settlers in the promised land, it will afford him no small degree of satisfaction to have recorded his protest, on the pages of earth's history, against the folly of infidelity, and the miserable service of Satan; to have made a written declaration of his complete satisfaction with the evidences of Christianity and the pleasurable service of Christ; and to have left the echo of his voice among the millions of mankind, inviting, exhorting, and beseeching them to emigrate to the better country. That the reader and writer may meet there at last, is the sincere prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

WILLERBY, NEAR HULL, YORKSHIRE, }  
April 30th, 1853.

# THE BETTER LAND.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE PRESENT WORLD.

“Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest.”—MICAH ii. 10.

SCRIPTURE and reason, experience and observation, unite to convince us that the present world is not our rest. And if we seriously reflect on the imperfect good and numerous evils of this sublunary state, we shall find no cause to regret, but, on the contrary, abundant reason to rejoice, that we have no continuing city here. Our object in writing these pages is to assure you, dear reader, that you will seek in vain for happiness on earth, unless you seek it in the way to heaven; to show that it is not desirable you should be a permanent settler here; and to induce you to emigrate at once from Spiritual Egypt to the Celestial Canaan. And if you have already left the present world, in your affections, and are on your journey to “THE BETTER LAND,” we hope

to convince you that there is nothing to go back to but guilt and misery ; nothing but spiritual beggary, slavery, and everlasting destruction.

You will perceive that, for the present, we shall speak of the *spiritual* empire of Satan, of his dominion in the world of spiritual wickedness ; and, with this understanding, let us carefully observe,

1. *The general features of the country.*

“The waste howling wilderness.” Deut. xxxii. 10.

The country where every sinner has his *spiritual* residence is properly designated “a waste howling wilderness,” because of its *moral* sterility. Nevertheless, it is better in its origin than in its history, and is of very great antiquity. It was a very delightful land in the beginning : its valleys teemed with verdure, and its hills were mantled with every variety of beauty. Every tree that was pleasant to the eyes and good for food grew in its fertile soil ; the tree of life also waved its luxuriant branches in the midst of the garden,—for then it was a garden, a blooming Paradise. And to all its delicious fruits and blooming flowers its happy population had free access.

You might have sought it from Dan to Beersheba for a groan, or a pain, or a tear, and found nothing but smiles, and ease, and happiness ; and from the river even to the ends of the earth, for guilt, or misery, or sin, and found nothing but peace, and innocence, and

heaven. Man was holy, and hence the world was happy. The wolf could dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; and the cow and the bear could feed together. The lion and the ox had no antipathies, and the vulture and the dove could roost together on the same branch.

If the asp dwelt in holes in those days of primeval peace, the sucking child might have pursued its infant gambols with perfect impunity in their vicinity. And if the cockatrice had its den, then the weaned child could have placed its hand there in certain security. The viper's nest was harmless as that of the dove in those days of pristine innocence, and they did not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain. May "earth be turned to Paradise again!"

It was such in the beginning; but, alas! it was soon invaded by a powerful enemy, and was overthrown by that proud usurper about six thousand years ago. By one man, SIN entered our otherwise holy, happy world, and that frightful monster brought death into it, and all our woe. And hence the place of that people over whom the god of this world sways his sceptre, is known now, as to *name*, by such designations as these: "The land of Egypt," "Spiritual Babylon," and "This present evil world."

As to *situation*, it is far from God, the source of all good, and on the very brink of perdition, the fountain



of all misery : " the whole world lieth in wickedness." Its *soil*, because of its sterility, is now called desert ; a land not tilled nor sown. Hence its *productions* are briars, thorns, noxious weeds, empty vines, and barren fig trees. And in addition to this it is enveloped in *darkness*, thick, spiritual darkness ; as it is written, " Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." As to *seasons*, it is always spiritual winter : dark, cold, stormy winter. As we shall afterward have occasion to show more at large, its *atmosphere* is pregnant with wasting destructions and pestilential vapors.

And as to its *illicit commerce*, this beggars description. It has its " vanity fairs," and its brutal festivities, which are held in its great capital Babylon, mother of harlots, the city of destruction, where its doers of iniquity are sold to work evil in the sight of the Lord. Destitute of all spirituality, its people " are carnal, sold under sin." Its very *nature is earthly*, it tends to destruction, it hastens to ruin, " it is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." Its doom is fixed, and now for a long time its judgment lingereth not, and its damnation slumbereth not. Up, then ! get thee out of this place ! escape for thy life ! Observe,

2. *Its diabolic government and Satanic ruler.*

" That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Rev. xii. 9.



Spiritual wickedness is in its high places. It is emphatically "the kingdom of Satan," "wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." From sacred history it appears that the "prince of this world" was once a bright angel in heaven, and perhaps he was one of the most exalted of created intelligences before the throne of the Eternal. But before the probation of angels was ended he fell, and lost his pristine glory. Sin converted him from a holy angel into a devil. The nature of the sin that dethroned him is supposed to have been pride; as it is written, "Lest, being lifted up with *pride*, ye fall into the condemnation of the Devil."

It is thought that the great insurrectionist sought to revolutionize heaven; and that he was sufficiently vain to aspire to the governorship and absolute sovereignty of the universe. But the Almighty, wrapped in his infinite perfections, could laugh at all his pretensions, and hold him in derision! When he spake the word, "Bind him hand and foot!" instantly it was done; when he uttered his voice, "Cast him down!" immediately his place was not found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, and his angels were cast out with him. Such is the chief ruler of the old country. And besides that old serpent which is called the Devil,

and Satan, there are legions of subaltern fiends, who do his deeds of darkness and death among the inhabitants of the earth :

“They throng the air, and darken heaven,  
And rule this lower world.”

And in addition to these, there are myriads of deputies in the shape of men, who are only a few degrees less wicked than Satan himself. The government of Satan is more than despotical, worse than tyrannical—it is diabolical! Can you submit to be any longer taken captive by him at his will? To be happy under such rule is impossible—it cannot be. How long have you groaned under his galling yoke! O when shall it once be that you will demand your freedom from his service, and claim your emancipation from spiritual slavery? O for an effort now! Observe,

3. *Its morally degraded and infidel population.*

“The God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them which believe not.” 2 Cor. iv. 4.

Having noticed the place and the prince, let us now turn our attention to the *people* of this desert land. If we consider their *employments*, we find that they are all slaves to the man of sin. Their *number* is computed at six hundred millions, and there is not a free man among them: they are led captive by the Devil at his will. Their *miseries* are such, of course, as are inseparably connected with a state of spiritual bondage.

Destitute of all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, they feed upon husks, they perish with hunger, they are clothed in rags, filthy rags; they are poor, and wretched, and miserably blind :—for Satan hath blinded their eyes, lest they should escape from his service and be blessed with the glorious liberty of the children of God. Their spiritual *afflictions* are of the most heart-rending description. From the crown of their heads to the soles of their feet there is no soundness, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; and their wounds are not bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Their *morals* are in perfect keeping with all the rest. They are all infidels, either professed or practical. Hence liars and slanderers, harlots and drunkards, blasphemers and thieves, tyrants and assassins, abound through the length and breadth of the land.

It may be said of their spiritual disposition that “their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips;” and their heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. And as it is with one, so it is with all. Without the grace of God, every country and every city is fallen; every town, every village, and every family is ungodly; every individual is a sinner; and every imagination of the thoughts of every heart is only evil, and that continually. Sin has tainted every region on earth, and enthralled every man: “They are

all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable ; there is none that doeth good ; there is none righteous, no, not one." Now, from all this arises their *imminent danger*. They are exposed to the wrath of God, liable to be cut down every moment ; likely to be taken away with a stroke, and then a great ransom cannot deliver them. They are on the very brink of perdition, and there is but a step betwixt them and death. And as to their *final doom*, this is fixed for ever, except they repent : " Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished ;" " they shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God." " And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

Is it any wonder that wise men in every age have desired a better country than this, abounding, as it does, with stinging adders, biting serpents, and broods of vipers ; and overrun, as it is, with snarling dogs, prowling wolves, and roaring lions ? No wonder that such as have hastened their escape, are unmindful of returning to the country from whence they came out. What, indeed, is there to return to, but the habitation of dragons, the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean bird : one vast menagerie of every poisonous reptile and every ravenous beast ? There is nothing that is worth even *looking* back for, except to witness your departure from Sodom, and your escape from Gomorrah, ye unconverted husbands or wives, or parents or

children, that were left behind. Lest ye suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, make haste to come out of Egypt, infested, as it is, with dens of thieves and gangs of murderers, and doomed, as it is, to perdition ; we exhort you to come out of it, lest ye partake of its plagues.

Having furnished this brief description of the kingdom of darkness, its ruler, and ungodly population, our subsequent remarks on the present world must be understood in a more literal and general sense. Observe we,

4. *Its frequent and strange illusions.*

“Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” Eccles. i. 2.

It is surprising how much of men’s happiness is derived from reflections on the past, or drawn from anticipations of the future, and how little satisfaction they feel in their present possessions. They are either telling of good days gone by, or singing of “good times coming,” but, in some way or other, they fail to be happy just now. There is much that is true in what the celebrated poet has said on this subject :

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast:  
Man never is, but always to be blest ;  
The soul, uneasy and confined from home,  
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.”

The fact is, men undervalue their present privileges, overrate their future prospects, and retain but partial recollections of their past experience. Look at that schoolboy : blessed as he is with every comfort, favored



with every privilege, and free from every care, he has no idea that this is the time for him to be happy. He is looking forward to the time when he shall be a man, and ride his own horse, drive his own carriage, and manage his own business, as the period of complete felicity. He is deceived with the brilliant outside appearances of men immersed in the business of life. He knows not that manhood has its difficulties, business its anxieties, emolument its miseries, and power its responsibilities.

Well, let us see him again at the end of some twenty years, in the full possession of the objects that he dreamed of in childhood, and sighed for in youth. Now he rides his own horse ; there he goes driving his own chariot ; here he is, over head and ears in the business of maturer life ; but, strange to tell, he now adverts to the days of his juvenile joy, when he sat at his father's table, ran in his father's garden, and pursued his innocent sports in his father's field, as the happiest days of his life. It often happens that men love home the most when called to leave it, and seldom learn its worth until they feel its loss. This also is vanity. How many and painful are the disappointments of men in the present life. Let us consider,

(1.) *Its perishing hopes.*

“My strength and my hope is perished.” Lam.  
iii. 18.

Every stage and every station in social and active life supplies abundant evidence to prove that they are only mortals in miniature ; men only a few moments in this vain world, who are strangers to bright hopes blasted. It frequently happens that the object of man's most intense desire mocks all his efforts to secure it ; like the ignus fatuus, it dazzles only to deceive him ; it allures him only to elude his grasp ; and having involved him in difficulty, then it vanishes from his vision, and leaves him in distress. One reason that may be assigned for the disappointments of human life is this : men grasp at shadows ; they pursue phantoms ; and, if they sow the wind, what marvel is it that they reap the whirlwind ? "For that which a man soweth, the same shall he also reap."

"It is not for man to be seeking his bliss  
Or building his hopes in a region like this :  
Let him seek for a city which hands have not piled,  
And sigh for a country by sin undefiled."

If we turn from the multitudes whose fairest prospects are blighted and whose worst fears are realized, from time to time, and speak of such as may, in a modified sense, be said to have gained the object of their heart's desire, still we often find ourselves in the unwelcome region of disappointment. In many instances, the object secured does not yield such a revenue of enjoyment, in possession, as it promised in prospect. There is some

defect, it may be, or some blemish not previously discovered; something lacking either in quantity or quality. If the cup of enjoyment prove to be as full as was expected, perhaps it is not so sweet as was anticipated. There is often a fly in the pot of ointment. Our pleasures are taxed with pain; our joys are adulterated with sorrow; and amid our earthly comforts are crosses too. "Earth's fairest roses grow on thorns, and its sweetest honey wears a sting." Perfect happiness is not here:

"You may seek it in splendor and dress,  
In the regions of pleasure and taste;  
You may seek it in creatures, and seem to possess,  
But will prove it a vision at last."

(2.) *Its groundless fears.*

"In great fear where no fear was." Psalm liii. 5.

There is a strange amount of restlessness in the present life, arising from distressing fears that are never realized. Perhaps we have gained few things of a temporal nature that were worth hoping for, which have not cost us their worth in fears. It is an established and well-known fact, that in the present world, troublesome fears live next door to ardent hopes, and sometimes these conflicting influences are seen blended together, like the colors of the rainbow, flushing and glowing on the same cheek, and alternately brightening and overcasting the countenance of the same individual at almost the same instant: now hope predominating, and spreading its sunshine over the index of man's inte-



rior emotions ; and then fear prevailing, and overspreading it with the darkness of anxiety and doubt.

There are few men, indeed, whose experience will not furnish the proof that a very great proportion of this present life is frittered away in fearing, when they ought to be hoping in God and shouting for joy. "The Lord is my light and my salvation : whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life : of whom shall I be afraid?" Even Jacob said, "Me have ye bereaved of my children ; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away : all these things are against me." Nothing of the kind, thou venerable patriarch, all these things are conspiring to accomplish for thee a great deliverance. And David said, when harassed with thoughts that troubled him without cause, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." No, not so, thou man after God's own heart : thou shalt finish thine earthly campaign in the bosom of an affectionate people, full of days, and full of peace, and sleep securely, covered with honors, in the sepulchres of thy fathers : "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God," and be happy to-day—contented now.

5. *Its prolific sources of human misery.*

"Innumerable evils have compassed me about." Ps. xl. 12.

Some of the evils of which we are about to speak are

less grievous, of course, than are others ; but the least of them will, we trust, have some influence in inducing you to seek the "rest that remains to the people of God," and to awaken within us also "a fear lest a promise being left us of entering into that rest, we should seem to come short of it." Observe,

(1.) *Its incessant toils.*

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Gen. iii. 19.

The present world is a theatre of toil ; and after all that can be said about the dignity of labor, it is one of the consequences of the entrance of sin into the world, that man is doomed to subsist by the sweat of his brow. It is true that he is a being constituted for active purposes ; because, in his innocent state, he was placed in the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it ; but it is equally true that he never was designed for perpetual drudgery. Perhaps no man ought to eat of the fruits of the earth who does not earn his bread by filling some useful station in human society, except during the periods of childhood, affliction, or old age. It is certain that the multitude generally must labor hard and long, in order to procure the necessaries of life.

And hence it is not desirable that we should be settlers in a country with a soil so unproductive and cursed, as to require all our time, and skill, and energy to make it yield sufficient for human subsistence. Though

some few of the lifeless living, of the unburied dead, of the drones of the hive of this busy life, subsist with little effort, yet there are millions whose best efforts scarcely meet their necessities ; so that the wants of the human family require the energies of all, to supply enough to eat and wear. This also is vanity.

(2.) *Its perpetual turmoils.*

“I have seen violence and strife in the city.” Psalm lv. 9.

What an arena of strife and combat, of defeats and conquests, is the present world ! What brawls and bickerings, contentions and jealousies, ragings and cruelties, there are in many of the families of the earth ! What political excitements, feuds, and animosities we have in the various boroughs, towns, and cities of this world ! And what intrigues, corruptions, and wrongs are practiced, to accomplish the purposes of a party among the children of men !

What conflicts are carried on between sovereigns and their subjects : what strifes about forms of government and codes of law ; about the constitution of parliaments, rights of countries, and the empire of kings ; and what rebellions, insurrections, and revolutions does the history of the kingdoms of this world record ! What wars, and rumors of wars, and scenes of carnage and blood, has it presented from time to time ! Its

pages are foul with crime, and crimsoned with blood. These also are "sore evils under the sun."

(3.) *Its multiplied sorrows.*

"Mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it."  
Psalm lv. 10.

What a vale of tears is here! Look into the *family*, and contemplate the sorrows of domestic life. Here is a father weeping over the ingratitude of a disobedient and prodigal son; there is a broken-hearted mother, bleeding with anguish over the ruin of an undutiful daughter; yonder a husband or wife, with eyes pouring out tears unto God, over the dissipated habits of those who are pledged to cherish them in trouble, and in sorrow to wipe away their tears; and almost everywhere we see the various members of the family circle sighing at the grave of departed worth, saying, "Thou destroyest the hope of man."

Look into the *world*, and contemplate the secular sorrows of this present life. Here is a poor, but honest and industrious man, while his children are crying for bread, saying, "What shall we eat or drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed?" There is a rich man, dashed, by unforeseen and unavoidable calamity, from the greatest affluence to the deepest poverty, so that his "distress comes upon him as a whirlwind, and his want as an armed man."

And even the *Church* itself is the scene of sorrow from time to time. The priest is found weeping between the porch and the altar, and the people of God hang their harps on the willows, "to mourn for the sins and to weep for the wickedness of the land."

The cause of all the evils under the influence of which the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, is *sin*. The world is doomed to toil, and suffer, and weep, because it is wicked. And the necessary consequence of sin is affliction and death. But as we have previously referred to the ungodliness of the inhabitants of the present evil world, and shall afterward allude to afflictions, and the end of these things, which is death, we will now turn away from the contemplation of the positive evils of this state, to reflect on its scanty sources of imperfect good. Observe we,

6. *Its insufficient supplies for perfect happiness.*

"But ye have not enough." Hag. i. 6.

Far be it from us to attempt to make the impression upon your mind that there is nothing good in the present life; and God forbid that you should at all undervalue your privileges on earth because we earnestly entreat you to seek a preparation for heaven. But whatever amount of good there is in the present evil world, there is not half enough to satisfy the extensive desires and to supply the wants of your immortal nature. Neither its wealth nor its pleasures, its honors nor its friend-

ships, no, nor even religion itself, if you confine it to this world only, can bless you to an extent that is commensurate with your capability for happiness. Let us contemplate,

(1.) *Its deceitful riches.*

“He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver.” Eccles. v. 10.

If men make gold their hope, or say unto the fine gold, thou art my confidence, experience proves that the wealth of this world cannot make its possessor happy. Riches are either too long in coming, or they too quickly make to themselves wings and fly away. They perish with using, and rust with hoarding ; or, before they have become cankered with keeping, they are made the booty of thieves, who break through and steal. Earthly treasures make men as uneasy to keep as they are anxious to gain them. They often drown them in destruction and perdition, and pierce them through with many sorrows. A little possessed increases desire for more, for the spirit of avarice cries “Give, give,” and never says, “It is enough.” The covetous man’s view of sufficiency is “a little more.” If such a man had the revenue of the world for his possession, he would be dissatisfied without a little more. Give him the flowers of every garden and the fruits of every field for his portion ; give him the earth for his estate and the ocean for his possession, and they would



neither be large enough nor full enough for him : he would languish life away in longings for "a little more."

It is said that a laundress, who was employed in the family of a governor of one of the United States of America, said to him with a sigh, "Only think, your Excellency, how small a sum of money would make me happy." "How little, madam?" said the governor. "O dear, sir, twenty dollars would make me perfectly happy." "If that is all, you shall have it;" and he immediately gave it to her. She looked at it with joy and thankfulness ; and before the governor was out of hearing, she exclaimed, "I wish I had said forty." Thus it would seem that the possession of twenty dollars made room enough in her avaricious desires for forty ; and if she had received forty, her lucre-loving heart would have been large enough for a hundred : hundreds possessed, make room, in the capacity of such as have a passion for money, for thousands ; and thousands, for millions ; and those who possess the most are not rich enough without "a little more." So true is that scripture, "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver ; nor he that loveth abundance with increase." This is also vanity.

(2.) *Its unsatisfying pleasures.*

"The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing." Eccl. i. 8.

If all the senses of the body were gratified in the highest degree, it is certain that such very indulgence would increase the demand for pleasure ; and, instead of producing a feeling of complete satisfaction, would create desires that could never be satisfied. Let the eyes of man be gratified with the sight of all that is wondrous in nature, skilful in science, and curious in art ; and with all that is great and glorious in earth, and skies, and seas—a high authority has decided the point, that “ the eye is not satisfied with seeing.”

Let his ears be ravished with every variety of sound, from the hum of bees, the song of birds, and the murmuring of the brook, to the dashing of the mighty cataract, the roaring of the stormy ocean, and the tremendous thunderpeal ; let the most eloquent orators carry him away on the impetuous tide of their most thrilling orations ; let harmony bring forth all her instruments of melody ; let the sons of Jubal, and the daughters of music, be assembled : the Miriams, and Deborahs, and Davids, of ancient, and the Paganinies, and Jenny Linds, and Julliens, of modern times, join in concert to charm his ears with melodies on earth only inferior to the music of heaven, and we have authority for saying that he is dissatisfied still ; for as the eye is not satisfied with seeing, so neither is the ear ever “ filled with hearing.”

And the same remarks are applicable to all the



senses of the body. Though man's palate be pampered with all the luxuries that Europe, Asia, Africa, and America can furnish, he would still feel himself to be the subject of wants that were unsupplied. Let him be arrayed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day ; let him eat, drink, and be merry, and rise up to play ; let him be amused in the theatre, caressed in the ball-room, and flutter with the gay and the proud in the dance—"the heart, the heart is lonely still." Give to him the perfumes of every rose, and let him feast on the fragrance of every flower of the field ; yea, give to him the very quintessence of every sensual gratification, and he would feel cravings, after all, which nothing on earth could satisfy.

And the same is true of its most exquisite pleasures of an intellectual and scientific kind. The man of letters may glory in his books ; he may exult in his ability to cast his numbers, solve his problems, master his languages, and astonish the world with his literary productions : the naturalist may delight in his competence to classify the works of creation into kingdoms, mineral, vegetable, and animal : the chemist may charm himself with his arrangement of the productions of nature, while he writes on one class of herbs, "nutrition," marks another "physic," and affixes the label of "poison" on all the rest : the zoölogist may rejoice in his qualification to range his living creatures according to their quali-

ties, tribes, and species, from the invisible animalcule, to the great leviathan that trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth ; from the smallest insect that flutters in the sunbeam, to the mighty eagle, soaring in the midst of heaven, and from the chirping grasshopper to the noble elephant ; and the geologist may gladden with joy as he passes through the different strata of the earth, and writes "limestone" on this class of rocks, and "granite" on that, and "marble" on the other ; but none of these pleasures, nor all of them combined, can meet the demands of man's capability for enjoyment.

It is recorded of a Roman emperor, who ran the whole round of worldly pleasure, that he offered a rich reward to any one who should discover a new pleasure ; teaching us that "the soul of man has desires that nothing sensual can satisfy, and capacity which nothing earthly can fill. Whatever is limited by space, and bounded by time, is too narrow and too short for the capability of man's immortal part. It longs and pants for the infinite, and cannot be satisfied with less."

(3.) *Its withering honors.*

"And all the glory of man is as the flower of grass."  
1 Peter i. 24.

If men pant for human honor and worldly aggrandizement, and, after many fruitless efforts, reach the pinnacle of fame, they find the lofty summit of public distinction to be a giddy height and a slippery place, and that it

is as difficult to remain secure at such an altitude as it was to climb the rugged steep. Human honors tarnish with time. The loveliest laurels of earth wither with wearing. Time's transitory glories generally cost more to get them than they are really worth, and more to keep them than the market price.

It is a fact, that some who have had the greatest share of this world's honors, have literally sighed and wept for more. When Alexander the Great had triumphed over slaughtered thousands, wrapped cities in flames, and hurled empires into ruins, his thirst for empire and glory was unslaked still; and, after having conquered the world, he sat down and wept because there were no other worlds to conquer. And it is not improbable that man, enthroned with universal empire in this world, would be dissatisfied still. Though old men and maidens, and young men and children, should shout hosanna to his name; though historians should record his greatness, and sublimest poets sing his praises; though philosophers, heroes, statesmen, and warriors, should pay him homage; and though princes, and peers, and emperors, and kings, should lay their honors at his feet, he would feel a heart within him that would pant for more—more wealth, more pleasure, more honor, and whatever else this short-enduring world could give.

It is said of Lord Nelson, when almost at the height

of his glory, that such was the secret unhappiness of his heart, that, in one of his private letters, he wrote : "There is no true happiness in this present life ; and in my present state, I could quit it with a smile. Not that I am insensible of the honors my king and country have heaped upon me ; yet I am ready to quit this world of trouble and envy." "O crown !" said King Antigonus, "more noble than happy : if men knew how full thou art of cares and dangers, no man would take thee up, though he should find thee in the street." So true is that saying of the poet :

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

Whether men seek for happiness in wealth, or fame, or worldly pleasures, "miserable comforters are they all." Earth yields not such a plant : it grows not in this corrupted soil, nor blossoms in this polluted atmosphere : it is a native of a nobler sphere—the flower of Paradise.

(4.) *Its faithless friendships.*

"I was wounded in the house of my friends." Zech. xiii. 6.

It is allowed that much of the highest enjoyment of which our social nature is susceptible, is to be found in the bosom of human friendship. But is it not equally true that many of the keenest sorrows that we have to feel come from the same quarter ; that a thousand pangs and pains spring from the same source ; and that

we generally suffer more from our professed friends than we do from our avowed enemies? Our most exquisite sensibilities are only accessible to professed friends: no avowed enemy is suffered to come near enough our hearts to afflict us vitally. But to friends, we open the sacred enclosure of the inmost soul: these are admitted into confidential intercourse, and received into the most intimate fellowship with our spirits; and, alas! they sometimes prove false at the heart; and, having stabbed our vital sensibilities, leave the victim of their cruelty to bleed with anguish at every pore.

Paul's greatest perils were among "false brethren." David's greatest grief was from his familiar friend: "if it had been an enemy, then he could have borne it." Joseph suffered the most from "his own brethren." And even Jesus "was wounded in the house of his friends." And if they prove faithful and true in the cloudy and dark day, and are present to help when the storms of adversity blow; if they are loving as David, and as pleasant as Jonathan, as devoted as Damon, and dear as Pythias, then we are harassed with the fear of separation from spirits so kindred; and when circumstances tear them away from our embrace, we are "riven with anguish of loss." Endearing as affectionate friendship is, it fails to furnish us with perfect happiness. Where then shall we seek for it? Where on earth shall we find it? Let us turn to the religion of *time*. Observe,



(5.) *Its imperfect piety.*

"I shall be satisfied *when* I awake with thy likeness."

Ps. xvii. 15.

If religion fails to meet the wants and wishes of our nature, then is our case a hopeless one, and our wound incurable. Riches cannot make us happy : pleasures cannot please sufficiently : honors are not high enough nor bright enough to furnish us with full fruition : knowledge cannot interest us to the extent of our desires : friendship fails to perfect our felicity ; and if religion cannot make our bliss on earth complete, then are we beyond the reach of all things in this world to constitute us blessed, to the extent of our capacity for happiness.

But is there imperfection in this also ? is there any sign of failure here ? Alas ! master, yes. What ! the ocean of all good fail ? the immense, the infinite fail ? Religion, the soul of happiness, fall short ? Indeed ! What ! and "is there no balm in Gilead ?" Yes, a few scruples, two or three drachms ! but not half enough to make man content without eternal glory. Ah, no ! if we delight in the service of God ; if our peace flow as a river, and our religious joy abound as the waves of the sea ; yea, if our happiness surpass all understanding, transcend all description, and defy all human conception ; yet the moment you cut off the expectations of the soul from the infinite good, and confine its

enjoyments within the limits of time and the boundaries of this world, you blast its fairest prospects for ever and ever! Take future bliss and eternal glory and joy out of religion—deprive us of “that blessed hope of immortal happiness,” and doom us to live and die only here; and if in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable. “I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness;” when I arise from the dead and enter heaven.

7. *Its transitory life and insecure enjoyments.*

“Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” Prov. xxvii. 1.

Supposing we had all that heart could wish in the shape of enjoyment—endued with wisdom, endowed with riches, indulged with pleasures, and covered with earthly honors, and the days of our years to be three-score and ten—yet how transient is human life! And if you subtract from this term the one-third of our time spent in the unconsciousness of sleep, the days passed away in the weakness of infancy, the years absorbed in the inexperience of youth, the months consumed in the furnace of affliction, and the period languished away in the feebleness of old age, how exceedingly little remains!

No wonder that human life is compared to a passing stream; to the swiftness of a post; to the casting of a weaver’s shuttle; to a troubled sleep; to a dream when



one awaketh ; to a span, and, even less, to a hand-breadth ; to a faded leaf, a withered flower, and perishing grass ; to a declining shadow ; and to “a vapor that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away.” And if we take into account how much the ordinary term of human existence may be cut shorter still by sin, by sickness, by want, by intemperance, or prematurely terminated by accident, man’s age is as nothing before God.

And the same contingencies belong to all that man inherits here. Some prowling thief may steal your wealth, when you suppose it to be the most secure. Some exquisite pain may interrupt your pleasures, when you least suspect its insidious intrusion and unwelcome presence. Some sorrow may spring up to mar your joy, when you suppose it to be for ever fled away. An envious spirit may seek to soil the plumage of your earthly fame with the tongue of filthy slander, and to lay your honor in the dust before you are aware. Events may transpire that will cast down the most exalted and happy of earth’s sons from the summit of human affluence into the profoundest deeps of indigence and temporal distress.

Every thing earthly is liable to accident, or to misfortune, falsely so called ; for thunders peal, lightnings flash, storms rage, eruptions vomit, and earthquakes swallow, as God permits, and in due subjection to his

superintendence and Divine control. But still, to us there are contingencies, connected with all our earthly possessions ; so much so, that we know not what a day may bring forth. The next post may bring you the sad tidings that your richly freighted vessel has gone down at sea ; the next flood may sweep your property away ; the next thunder-storm may take your life away. We are only tenants-at-will, and may be disinherited and summoned hence, without notice, at any time. And thus, if our possessions and pleasures and friends never leave us, we are liable at all times to be compelled to leave them, because our times are in the hands of God, and we boast in vain of to-morrow, not knowing what "a day may bring forth."

8. *Its unhealthy atmosphere and universal mortality.*

"My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me." Job xvii. 1.

Whatever this present world is besides, it is an infirmary of impotent folk, a hospital of bodily sickness. The pestilence walketh in darkness, and destruction wasteth at noon-day. Consumptions waste us, fevers consume us, dropsies drown us, agues chill us, palsies stupefy us, rheums distort us, cramps seize us, and afflictions, in nameless forms, destroy the earthly house of this tabernacle ; and, as a consequence, human life becomes quickly extinct in this polluted atmosphere : "Man dieth, and wasteth away ; yea, man giveth up the

ghost, and where is he?" He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth, also, as a shadow, and continueth not. Hence one generation passeth away, and another cometh. So that "man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble;" and, seeing that his days are evil, it is a mercy that they are only few.

"An officer, in full military dress, who visited an asylum, was requested by one of the lunatics to say why he carried a sword by his side. He replied, for the purpose of killing his enemies. 'O,' said the madman, 'if you would let them alone, they would die of themselves.'" And the same may be said of these bodies of ours: if afflictions were to let us alone, we should die of ourselves. Worn out with age, we should gather up our feet and give up the ghost; for "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And if there were no feebleness in our nature, no liability to sickness, no tendency to dissolution, we must die by Divine appointment: "For it is appointed unto men once to die."

The young and the aged, the rich and the poor, must die: the weak and the mighty, the sinner and the saint, must die; we must all die—must needs die; we may die soon, and die suddenly: "All flesh is grass." All men are mortal, and are rushing to the tomb! so that if our felicity on earth were perfect in the highest de-

gree, we must leave it behind : we have no continuing city here : the time of our coming is no sooner felt in this world, than we receive notice to quit the scene : "The time of your departure is at hand." "Arise ye, and depart, for this is not your rest."

9. *Its probationary business, and only balm.*

"Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Heb. xiii. 14.

It is manifest, we think, that every thing of a sublunary character tends to produce the conviction that this is not our rest. Perhaps it is not saying too much to affirm, that amid all the confusions of this tumultuous and changing life, there is a secret order observed and maintained by Heaven ; so that what to men appears accidental in the condition of things, is the result of design on the part of God ; and that he wisely permits the bitter ingredients which fill the cup of mortals in this wilderness, in order that they may leave it in their affections, and seek an inheritance in Canaan. We are certain that it is not for his pleasure that he imbitters earth, but for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness, and desire heaven. Let us now consider,

(1.) *The probationary character of life.*

"To humble thee, and to prove thee, and to know what was in thine heart." Deut. viii. 2.

Here is the grand solution of the great enigma of human life : it is preparatory to a future and eternal

state. It is the school-time of eternity—the infancy of eternal manhood—the youth of everlasting age. It is the morning of an endless day—the spring of an eternal year—the seed-time of an everlasting harvest. It is the embryo of immortal existence. The present world is a wilderness that we are crossing to an everlasting destiny in heaven or hell—a vast ocean that we are sailing over to the port of Perdition or of Paradise ; and a state of trialship from whence, at death, the spirit ascends to glory, or drops into the lake of fire.

(2.) *The momentous business of life.*

“Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” Eccl. xii. 13.

Though it is our duty to be diligent in business, we do not properly discharge it except when we are fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. We have not answered the end of our being when we have only learned how to grope in a mine, or delve in a quarry, to sell in a shop, or to buy in a market. We were created for a nobler purpose than to sweat at the wool-combs, or sit at the loom, to toil in the fields, or to navigate floods. We were made for higher objects than to add house to house, and field to field, and eat and drink, and rise up to play :

“The soul of man was made to walk the skies,  
To crop the roses of immortal youth :  
To drink the fountain-head of sacred truth :

To swim in seas of bliss, and strike the string,  
And lift its voice to Heaven's eternal King:  
To spend eternity in grateful lays,  
And fill Heaven's wide circumference with praise."

The chief end of our existence is to do good and get good—to glorify God, and find our way to heaven. Our first business is to get religion: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." Our next business is to keep religion: "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Yea, the whole business of life is to practice religion. "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: "Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

(3.) *The only balm of life.*

"He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted."  
Luke iv. 18.

Having exercised your mind with the ills of the present life, let us now administer some cordial for your care. Having pointed out its evils, let us now direct attention to their only cure. Nature has no specific to apply to cure the ills of life. It would teach us, that after we had suffered awhile, death would terminate our being. Infidelity has no remedy to prescribe, but Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die. But this does not meet our case, for we don't want to die,



we don't like to die : we would suffer a thousand deaths to secure perpetual life. We want something to succor us in sickness ; to soothe us under sorrow ; to inspire us with patience under pain ; and to remind us, in our toils, of a rest where pure enjoyment reigns. We want something that can give us youth in age, and health in sickness, and light in darkness, and life in death.

Revealed religion only meets our case. This renders the ills of life supportable. It renders life desirable and happy. It sanctifies its pleasures, and soothes its sorrows ; it sweetens its bitters, and alleviates its pains. This succors us in sickness, and smooths our passage to the tomb. It scatters gloominess from the grave, and lights the dark valley. It extracts the monster's sting. It triumphs over death. Here is the sovereign antidote, the grand specific, the costly mixture to cure the world's woes. This bears the royal letters-patent, and the government stamp of heaven :

“ Religion, providence, an after-state,  
Here is firm footing ; this is solid rock :  
This can support us : all is sea besides—  
Sinks under us, bestorms, and then devours.”

If you wish to make the best of this vain world, as you journey through it, then seek to enjoy the pure and undefiled religion of Jesus Christ. This is the soul of happiness : embrace it now, and it will “ guide your feet into the way of peace.” Take present refuge



here, lest the avenger of blood overtake you. Make haste to hide you in the cleft of this "Rock of ages," until every calamity be overpast! Shelter is here! Safety is here! Happiness is here! Heaven is here! Delay not to practice religion: it will give you light in darkness, and life in death: it will give you "heaven on the way to heaven, and then heaven for ever!" Hallelujah! Amen!

## CHAPTER II.

## THE FUTURE STATE.

“Looking for that blessed hope.”—TITUS ii. 13.

ASSUMING that you are fully convinced that it is not at all desirable that you should be a permanent settler in this present evil world; and that, however much it might be desired, you have no continuing city here; we shall now seek to induce you to believe that a future state of “life and immortality is brought to light through the gospel.” Taken as a whole, the restlessness, contingencies, and liabilities, the imperfect good, and the numerous evils of this present world, afford presumptive evidence of a better world to come.

Observe, then, of a future state—

1. *It is necessary to solve the mysteries of providence.*

“What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.” John xiii. 7.

It is at least a presumptive proof of the existence of a future state, that the blessings of Divine Providence are unequally distributed in the present life. To say the

least, it is difficult to account for such a state of things ; and, perhaps, impossible to “justify the ways of God with man,” without referring all his dealings with his creatures to a future day of reckoning, and of final retribution. We find some of the sons of men whose eyes stand out with fatness, having more than heart can wish ; while many of their fellow-creatures, who, to all human appearance, are not one whit the less worthy than themselves, are suffered to literally perish for lack of the common necessities of life.

We find many who, so far as personal experience is concerned, are comparative strangers to the influences of pain ; while many others, without any particular reason known to us for the difference, are equally strangers to pleasurable emotions ; having days of sickness, and “wearisome nights appointed to them.” While some are favored with the blessings of education, of civilization, and all the privileges of a Christian country, millions are born, and live, and die in the thick darkness of heathenism, and have to grope their way to immortality.

In numberless instances, the *wicked* are “clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day ;” while some of the most virtuous and holy of men have, like Lazarus, “desired to be fed with the crumbs which fall from the rich man’s table.” It has been permitted, in many instances, for the wicked to persecute the righteous, to deprive them of the privileges of citizens, to

blast their reputation, to imprison and torture them, to pierce them with swords, to suspend them on gibbets, and consume them in flames, without any signal interference on the part of the moral Governor of the world.

Now, perhaps it is not too much to say, that it is impossible to reconcile such permissions of Providence with the power and wisdom, the holiness and justice, and the mercy and love of God, without turning for a solution of the mystery to the doctrine of a future state. This only unravels the mystery of providence: there is a future day of reckoning, when every one must give account of himself to God; and a future state of existence, where every man shall be rewarded according to his works. Observe,

2. *It is requisite to complete human happiness.*

“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” 1 Cor. xv. 9.

Such is the universal love of mankind for existence, that it becomes perfectly natural for virtuous humanity to long for immortality; and the very existence of such desire is considered, by men of extensive experience, of keen observation, and virtuous lives, to be, at least, a pleasing prelude of future life, and a presumptive proof that such a state is in reversion for us. Hence, asks the poet:

“Whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,  
This longing after *immortality*?  
Or whence this *secret dread* and *inward horror*

Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul  
Back on herself, and startles at *destruction*?  
'Tis the *divinity* that *stirs within us*!  
'Tis *heaven itself* that points out an *hereafter*,  
And intimates *eternity* to man.

The soul, secure in her existence, smiles  
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.  
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself  
Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years;  
But thou shalt flourish in *immortal youth*,  
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,  
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.

And this is a conclusion by no means confined to Christian countries. It is in the very nature of man to shudder at the thought of annihilation, to recoil from death, and to cling to life. Heathens have their hopes about a future state, and ancients, of all ages, have entertained ideas and cherished sentiments of immortality. Such being the case, it seems not merely desirable, but absolutely necessary to human happiness, that man should survive the ruin of this transitory place, outlive this imperfect state of things, and realize the full enjoyment of his ardent hopes, in perpetual existence in a world to come: "Now he that hath wrought us for this self-same thing is God." Our Maker hath implanted those ardent desires, those exhilarating hopes, those lively longings after immortality, in our very nature; and the inference is, that He who hath mixed up those hopes of existence, and those fears of destruction, in our very constitution and being, will fulfil such desires,

gratify such hopes, satisfy such longings, and complete our felicity by receiving his obedient creatures to a region of eternal life.

3. *It is desirable to all virtuous minds.*

“Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.”  
Phil. i. 23.

When we take into account the blessings of which we are partakers in this present evil world, and consider that, as guilty rebels, we deserve nothing but exclusion from Divine favor, and consignment to perdition, we can find much to excite feelings of devout gratitude to God. But without undervaluing the good of which we are now made partakers, we may safely affirm that a future and a better life is every way desirable.

Let us just suppose that, in the absence of any direct or written revelation on this most deeply interesting subject, some superior mind should venture to announce that, as soon as the soul of a virtuous man departs from the body, it is carried by some celestial beings into a region of perfect and perpetual bliss, where there is nothing to interrupt its pleasures, world without end; where the poorest become richer than Plutus, and the weakest wax stronger than Hercules, where peasants are changed into peers, and paupers to princes, and slaves are made higher in honor than the noblest of kings on the earth. Suppose he could speak of a country without a criminal, a tyrant, or a pauper; without sickness,



or sorrow, or pain, or death ; of a land where happiness blooms in the flowers, and felicity grows in the fruits ; where blessedness breathes in the winds, and where rivers of honey, and milk, and wine abound ; of a city with jasper walls, gates of pearl, and streets of gold ; and of a temple of precious stones, illuminated with Divine glory, and sufficiently spacious to accommodate all nations and all generations of men for ever. How would the Hesperian orchards, where the hero of Greece found Juno's golden apples, and the floral gardens of ancient Roman fable, wither in comparison with this Eden of everlasting delight ; and how would the sunniest bank in the Elysian fields discover its nakedness in contrast with this imaginary Paradise ! How desolate the most renowned cities of this world would appear when compared with this metropolis of the universe ! And how would the temple of Mecca, of Herod, and of Solomon dwindle into insignificance, when viewed with this temple of eternal magnificence and glory ! Now, perhaps all men would admit that such a place of enjoyment and such a state of perpetual felicity is extremely desirable ; and the least that can be said on the subject is this: *it possibly is so*. Independent of revelation, we observe,

4. *It is possible, atheists themselves being judges.*

“Even our enemies themselves being judges.” Deut. xxxii. 31.

Now it is worthy of remark, that after all the talent



that infidelity has employed to subvert the principles of Christianity, not one of its essential truths has been disproved, not one of its essential doctrines falsified, not one of its great and essential principles destroyed : "The foundation of God standeth sure." The utmost extent to which Anti-christianity has been able to reach is to profess dissatisfaction with the evidences by which the doctrine of a future state is supported. One of the champions of infidelity has said, "The perfection of knowledge is to doubt ; the highest attainment of philosophy is a doubtful solution of a doubtful doubt." Infidelity, to say the most of it, is only a system of denials, disputations, and doubts, having its origin in the depravity of human nature ; and some of its ablest advocates have been constrained to confess, at their departure, that they were "just about taking a leap in the dark."

According to infidelity, "In the origin of things, man, formed equally naked as to body and mind, found himself thrown by *chance* upon a land confused and savage ; an orphan deserted by the unknown power that produced him." Such is the philosophy of Volney. Now, even allowing, for argument's sake, that all men and things are the result of mere accident, the production of blind chance, (without remarking on the surprising fact that every man's head should chance to be on his shoulders, and not under his arm sometimes, and that his eyes should always chance to be in his head, and not

occasionally under the soles of his feet,) as there has chanced to be the present, there may chance to be a future world. Even atheists themselves being judges, the doctrine of a future state involves nothing impossible. If man was made by chance, and live and die by chance, he may rise again, he may live hereafter by chance, he may by chance be immortal, and by chance live for ever. If the doctrine of chance be entertained at all, if even the infidel himself believes it, it will constrain him to this conclusion—there may chance to be any thing that is not impossible. So that, in spite of all skepticism on the subject of revealed religion, the Bible may chance to be true, there may chance to be a hell, to be a heaven, and, after all, the ungodly may chance to perish in perdition, and the righteous to “eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”

And if, as the skeptic says, the “perfection of knowledge is to doubt, and the highest attainment of philosophy is only a doubtful solution of a doubtful doubt,” would it not be well for him to doubt the doubtfulness of the doubts which he has entertained about the truth of the doctrine of a future state? Would it not be consistent for him to doubt whether his doubtful solutions of doubtful doubts will leave him in happiness or misery at last, and thus prove himself to be a philosopher of the highest attainments? Let him be assured

that, if he continues to neglect religion, it will be a serious mistake at the last! and resolve, by the grace of God, to be on the safe side: "For their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."

5. *It is highly probable, and generally believed.*

"For God hath showed it unto them." Rom. i. 19.

The belief of the doctrine of a future state has generally obtained where no copies of the Scriptures have ever been circulated; where no Christian missionary has ever set his foot; and where no gospel sermon has ever been preached. "That the thinking principle in man is of an immortal nature, was believed by the ancient Egyptians, the Persians, the Phœnicians, the Scythians, the Celts, the Druids, the Assyrians, the Romans, the Greeks, and by almost every other ancient nation whose records have reached our times." Plato, Socrates, and Demosthenes, held the doctrine of the soul's immortality. "And there is scarcely a nation or tribe at present existing, however barbarous and untutored, in which the belief of a doctrine of a future state does not prevail.

"The Society Islanders, the New-Zealanders, the Tartars, the inhabitants of the Pelew Islands, the Burmans, and the various tribes of Africa, recognize the doctrine of man's existence beyond the grave." Of course their opinions of the felicity of the future state are various, almost as much so as their tribes; and that they are

generally erroneous cannot be denied ; but the fact that ancients and moderns of almost every nation, and savage and civilized people of every tongue, believe in the doctrine of a future state, is a strong presumptive proof of its existence. Some of their descriptions of future happiness, in the Hesperian gardens, where the souls of the virtuous are supposed to rest secure from every danger, and enjoy perpetual and uninterrupted bliss, are exceedingly poetic and interesting. What a delightful Eden the poetic mind of Virgil had conceived, when he described the visit of Æneas to his father Anchises in the *Elysian fields*:

“They came to plains where smiling Nature yields  
Perpetual verdure through the *Elysian fields* ;  
Luxuriant groves which bloom eternal spring ;  
Here happy souls in endless concerts sing.  
Through skies more spacious, more divinely clear,  
Their sun and stars shine round them all the year.”

“The notion of future happiness which is entertained by several of the tribes of Western Africa is this : that every thing which they wish for will immediately present itself to them. They believe that the Supreme Being will raise up for them every gratification which it is in human nature to be pleased with. If they wish to be in groves or bowers, among running streams or falls of water, they shall immediately find themselves in the midst of such a scene as they desire. To those who would be entertained with music, and the melodies of

sound, the concert arises upon their wish, and the whole region about them is filled with harmony. In short, they believe that every desire will be followed by fruition, and whatever a man's inclination directs him to, will be present with him." Now, it is contended on the part of men who entertain the most settled conviction of man's immortality, that the universal belief of the doctrine is such as to render it in the highest degree probable that such universal opinion is founded in truth. Thus far we have been walking by the light of nature and human reason; let us now turn to the superior light of revelation on the subject of a future state. Observe,

6. *It is certainly revealed in the ancient Scriptures.*

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off." Heb. xi. 13.

Thus it is written concerning the Old Testament saints, in St. Paul's account of those illustrious worthies, "These all died in faith—that they might obtain a better resurrection." It has been thought by some that the ancient patriarchs and poets, prophets and seers, were strangers to the idea of future life and immortality. This, however, is an error. The doctrine is plainly taught in the Old Testament. It is said that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob "desired a better country, that is a heavenly;" and of Abel, Noah, and others, that "these all died in faith, not having received the



promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

It is also plainly declared that Moses, in the sacrifices that he made, the privations that he submitted to, and the sufferings that he endured, "had respect unto the recompense of the reward." And others who had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments, were influenced by the same hope and faith in the doctrine of a future state of recompense. Mention is made of Gideon and Barak, of Samson and Jephtha, of Samuel also, and the prophets, who subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire; all of whom were influenced in their practice of piety, in their acts of self-denial, unconquerable intrepidity and heroism, by the firm belief of the doctrine of a full reward, in a future and a better state. And others were tortured, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth; yet so strong was their faith in the doctrine of a future state of recompense, that they resolved rather to sacrifice their privileges as citizens of this world, to suffer the most excruciating tortures, and even to give up their lives into the hands of their merciless persecutors, than to give up their hopes of immortality,

“not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a *better resurrection.*”

The patriarchs hoped for immortality : Job spake of a time when, though after his skin worms should destroy his body, yet in his flesh he should see God. The ancient poets sang of future life and immortality. The sweet singer of Israel struck the harp of Zion to this delightful theme ; for, as he looked through the vista of revelation into the future, and saw the distant bright-topped hills of the better land, he said, “Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” The holy prophets declared of the Messiah that he should ransom his people from “the power of the grave, and redeem them from death ;” and, with a holy enthusiasm, such as only the hope of a glorious resurrection could inspire, they uttered their voices, saying, “Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.” For “thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise,” said He who is “the resurrection and the life.” To death he said, “I will be thy plagues,” and to the grave, “I will be thy destruction ;” a plain intimation of the resurrection of the dead, and an early revelation of a future state.

7. *It is illustrated in the New Testament.*

“And hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” 2 Tim. i. 10.

According to Dr. A. Clarke, the original of the above



passage should have been rendered, "He hath illustrated life and incorruption." Though it appears that the doctrine of a future life was in part, at least, revealed to the people of God under the Old Testament dispensation, yet it is frankly acknowledged that the light which they enjoyed on this subject under the law and the prophets was comparatively dim, when contrasted with the glorious revelations of the gospel; and so great is the difference between the light of the two dispensations, that "life and immortality" may be said to be "brought to light through the gospel." The Old Testament announced the doctrine, but the New abounds with examples, proofs, and demonstrations of its truth. "The great Teacher sent from God" "hath *illustrated* life and incorruption:" He uttered his voice, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise! And he that was dead sat up." Martha, "thy brother shall rise again!" "Lazarus, come forth!" said the Prince of life, "and he that was dead came forth!" He settled the matter of immortality beyond all doubt, when, on the third day after his passion, he rushed from the tyrant's grasp, and shouted in triumph over the last enemy, "I am the resurrection and the life!" "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Hosanna to the Son of David, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light

through the gospel! "Shout, earth and heaven, this sum of good to man!"

Leaving now the "farthing candle" light of nature, and the glimmering taper light of providence, on the momentous subject of a future state, we can look on scenes of immortality in the glorious meridian sunlight of inspired revelation and gospel day. It is no longer a matter of conjecture as to whether man is a mere animal, or a compound of matter and mind. Scripture has set the matter at rest. God hath spoken on the subject, and thus saith the Lord, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." It is now no longer a subject of mere speculation as to man's immortality; revelation has settled the disputed point, and said, "Though a man die, he shall live again." The sunbeams of the New Testament have revealed the secret, that the soul lives when the body dies, and lives for ever! It is written on almost every page of the holy oracles, either by implication or in express terms, that man is destined to immortality. To doubt it, is to doubt God's own immutable veracity. To deny it, is to pronounce the Bible a "cunningly devised fable," and of course to look upon Christianity as a fanatic's dream, and on Christ as an impostor.

It must come to this: Christianity is either a system of priestcraft, from beginning to end, or else there is a

future state, and man is immortal—there is a hell and there is a heaven. It is written in the law, and it is brought to light and illustrated by the gospel. The Scriptures are full of futurity, full of immortality, full of eternity.

It is no valid objection for unbelievers to say, “If we are to live after death, why have we not a more certain knowledge of the future state?” for, although we are ignorant of many things in reference to the future world, yet we know a great deal more of it before we are called to exist in it, than we knew about the present world before we came into it. And perhaps we shall find reasons, in our subsequent remarks, that will satisfy your mind that sufficient is revealed of the future state of life and immortality to answer all the purposes of practical godliness, and to accomplish man’s present and eternal salvation. A future state of existence is plainly revealed in the Holy Scriptures; but of the happiness “of just men made perfect” in the world to come, we have only a partial revelation. Observe,

8. *The glories of heaven are only partly revealed.*

“The glory which shall be revealed.” Rom. viii. 18.

That which was spoken by the prophet of the inconceivable glory of the gospel may be applied with still greater propriety to future glory: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that

love him ;” yet sufficient may be seen, and heard, and felt of future life and glory, to raise our affections to heaven, to quicken our desires after it, to induce us to give all diligence in seeking a preparation for it, and to teach us to “count all things but loss for the knowledge” of our title to the “inheritance of the saints in light.” The Scriptures assure us that “the glory which shall be revealed” is such as will abundantly reward every privation, sacrifice, and suffering, in the present state.

That there is a place and state of enjoyment, to gain which no privation is too great, no sacrifice too expensive, and no suffering too exquisite, is revealed in the Scriptures, in a light that surpasses the brightness of the sun at noonday ; but as to what that blessedness really is, in its nature and degrees, is, to us at present, only partially made known. Here “we know only in part.” “It doth not yet appear what we shall be ;” that is, all that awaits us is not revealed, every thing does not yet appear ; but some things we are permitted even here to know. It is revealed that “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory ; and shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” It does appear that we shall be exempt from suffering of every kind and of every degree, and that pleasures, vast as our wishes, extensive as our desires, and permanent as our being, will be the portion of our cup, and the lot of our inheritance. The most vivid

descriptions which mortals can furnish of the glories of heaven, are but imperfect and rude sketches of the loveliness and beauty of the Paradise of God. The rest is glory yet to be revealed. Let us resolve to be saved by grace, in time, that in eternity we may inherit glory. Observe we,

9. *A further revelation is inexpedient.*

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." John xvi. 12.

It is not improbable, that the veil fully removed from future glory would frustrate the purposes of God with respect to the present state, would destroy man's free agency, and swallow up the trifles of time in the momentous realities of a vast eternity. Perhaps there is as great an influence exerted on our fears from the pit of perdition, and on our hopes from the glories of Paradise, as is consistent with the preservation of our mental and moral equilibrium. Many good and wise men are persuaded that it is necessary for our present state of trial that here we should only be permitted to see the glories of heaven "through a glass darkly;" and that we should "know only in part" what God hath prepared for them that love him.

A further revelation would, perhaps, unsettle us to an extent that would interfere with the proper discharge of our duties, unfit us for our stations of usefulness, and fill us with desires to depart and be with Christ, before



we had served our generation. It is more than probable that such a state of things would render every thing earthly so trifling and insignificant, that we should be too anxious to be removed, and impatient to wait "all the days of our appointed time;" and, under the influence of intense longings to be gone, we should sigh from morning till night, saying, "O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest!"

It is recorded of a company of seamen, who had been long out on a voyage of discovery, that, "on their return, as they neared the shores of their native country, one went to the mast-head, and discovering the tops of his native hills, he suddenly and emphatically cried out, 'Land ahead!' This was too much for the hardy tars: it unmanned them for some time: the thoughts of home, and the happy meeting with friends and spirits kindred, rendered them unfit for the duties of seamen. As they drew near the shore, they began to dress themselves in their best apparel, and as soon as ever the vessel reached the beach, they leaped on the pier to embrace their friends, and other men had to be sought to bring the vessel to her moorings." Now, we are persuaded that a full revelation of the excessive glories of heaven would produce a similar effect on the heirs of a glorious immortality: before we had completed the voyage of grace, we should want to be on the shores of that glori-



ous land, "where all the ship's company meet, who have sailed with the Saviour beneath."

Christians are wanted here awhile, as a standing army, to fight the Lord's battles, and as a class of laborers, to cultivate his vineyard. The Church of God has the gospel to preach, the heathen to save, the world to convert; and such being the case, to have a full discovery of the inconceivable glories of heaven is not desirable at present, not necessary for the wilderness, not expedient for our feeble state: "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

10. *A full discovery of heaven is impracticable.*

"For there shall no man see me and live." Exod. xxxiii. 20.

If by men it were deemed desirable to have a fuller revelation of the glories of a future state, it is clearly stated in the oracles of God, that a full discovery, under existing circumstances, is an impossibility. We are only capable, at the present, of receiving a drop from the boundless ocean, prepared only for a faint glimpse of the beatific sight; and, perhaps, more than a slight foretaste would injure, if not destroy, these tabernacles made of clay. It is certain that excessive glory would overwhelm us: "For this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

When angels have appeared, at different periods, to men, the effect has been almost insupportable. When

Gabriel appeared to the prophet, the majesty of this created inhabitant of the regions of glory was such, that when Daniel beheld him he was speechless, strengthless, and senseless: overwhelmed with the vision, he was, for a time, dumb, sank away into a swoon, and there was no breath left in him. When Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus, the persecutor was suddenly arrested by the appearance of the hated man of Galilee, who had robed himself with light as with a garment, and decked himself with majesty. The effect was such as to strike the whole band of crusaders to the earth, and to smite the ringleader of this anti-christian expedition with total blindness for the space of three days. When John, the beloved disciple, beheld the glorious appearance of the Son of Man, walking among the golden candlesticks, the effect was so overpowering and overwhelming, that he "fell at his feet as dead."

"'You teach,' said Trajan, the Emperor of Rome, to Rabbi Joshua, 'that your God is everywhere: I should like to see him.' 'But he cannot be seen,' replied Joshua: 'no mortal eye can behold his glory.' The emperor persisted: 'Well,' said Joshua, 'let us try first to look at one of his ambassadors.' Trajan consented. The Rabbi led him into the open air at noon-day, and bade him look at the sun. 'I cannot,' said Trajan: 'the light dazzles me.' 'Thou art unable,'

said Joshua, 'to endure the light of his creatures : how canst thou expect to behold the resplendent glory of the Creator? The sight would annihilate thee.'" And such are the teachings of holy writ. When Moses prayed to the Lord, saying, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," he received this reply : "No man can see my face and live." So the Lord put him into the cleft of a rock, and covered him with his hand, until his glory passed by, or else Moses had been a dead man.

Hence it is evident that a full revelation of the glories of a future state would be too much for frail mortality, and that before we can inherit glory, "This corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, and mortality be swallowed up of life." And agreeable to these truths, if our conversation is in heaven, and from thence we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, he will change these vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his own glorious body ; and then shall we be able to sustain "the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

11. *A partial revelation of the future state sufficient.*

"They have Moses and the prophets : let them hear them." Luke xvi. 29.

Although the glories of heaven are not fully revealed, yet enough appears to furnish us with motives sufficiently strong to bid defiance to every enticement or intimidation which the world can offer to a Christian, in

order to allure or coerce him from the paths of piety, and to induce him to give up his hope of the kingdom of heaven. It is a fact that cannot be successfully controverted, that under the influence of a settled conviction of the truth of the doctrine of a future state, some of the most abandoned of mankind, even harlots, publicans, and thieves, have been converted to God. It is also true of some of the weakest believers in Christ, that, when placed in the most unfavorable circumstances, they have clung to the hope of a glorious immortality, held out to them in the Scriptures, with a tenacity of faith that has defied every species of influence exerted to separate them from the love of Christ and the hope of glory.

Nor is this the case with the poor only, who may be thought to have nothing to sacrifice or lose for the kingdom of heaven's sake. Though not many noble, not many wealthy, not many of the higher class of human society have renounced the world to embrace religion, yet, even among these, Christianity has always had a few faithful witnesses; and among these may be found examples of piety illustrative of the fact that the present revelation is amply sufficient for all the purposes of man's salvation. Not to enlarge on the examples which are furnished in the holy oracles, with which you are supposed to be familiar, such as Abraham, Joseph, Job, Daniel, and others, we might write volumes of

facts of this nature, furnished by the experience of Christians in modern life, which prove to demonstration that the Christianity of the New Testament is sufficiently potent in its principles to save amid the most flattering worldly circumstances, and to sustain its possessor amid the most powerful temptations.

Take, for an example, the case of a young Christian lady, the daughter of an English nobleman. She had embraced the truth as it is in Jesus. "Her father was almost distracted at the event, and by threats, by temptations to extravagance in dress, by reading, and travelling in foreign countries, and to places of fashionable resort, he took every means in his power to divert her mind from things unseen and eternal. But her 'heart was fixed.' At last, her father resolved upon a final and desperate experiment, by which his end should be gained, or his daughter's prospects in the present life for ever ruined. A large number of the nobility were invited to his house. It was so arranged that, during the festivities, the daughters of different noblemen, and, among others, this one, were to be called on to entertain the company with singing, and music on the piano. It was a dreadful crisis, and, as it approached, different individuals, at the call of the company, performed their parts with the greatest applause. At last, the name of the young Christian lady was announced. In a moment, all were in fixed, silent suspense, to see how the



scale of destiny would turn. Without hesitation she arose, and, with a calm and dignified composure, took her place at the instrument. After a moment spent in silent prayer, she ran her fingers along the keys, and then, with an unearthly sweetness, elevation, and solemnity, sang, accompanying her voice with notes of the instrument, the hymn commencing with the following lines :

‘No room for mirth or trifling here,  
For worldly hope or worldly fear,  
If life so soon is gone.’

The minstrel ceased : Christianity was triumphant : the daughter was saved. The father wept aloud for the salvation of his soul, and soon he was converted to God, and consecrated his great estate to the cause of Christ.” How mighty is sovereign grace !

Neither is the religion of the “bleeding cross” exclusively confined to the ignorant and unlearned among men. It is true that millions of unlettered minds have embraced it ; but it is equally true that men of the greatest natural abilities, and of the most extensively cultivated intellect, some of the profoundest philosophers and the noblest patriots, have embraced it, practiced it, and gloried in it—have lived and died in the hope of a glorious eternity. When such minds as Newton, and Locke, and Boyle, and Clarke, and Dick, and Howard, are arrayed on the side of the Christian revela-



tion of a future state, and men of the mightiest mind in every age have bowed before the majesty of this doctrine, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that sufficient is revealed of brighter worlds to allure us thither, and direct our way.

It is also worthy of observation that even skeptical minds have been brought over from the ranks of infidelity to the settled and unshaken belief of the truths of revelation ; so that it cannot be now said that Christians are universally of a credulous turn of mind, or that they are naturally or constitutionally disposed to believe without evidence. It is said of Lord Lyttleton and Gilbert West, two celebrated infidels, that they once undertook to sap the foundations of revealed religion. They commenced to read the New Testament for the purpose of refuting it, but before either of them had read it through, they were both converted by it, and each wrote to establish that very Christianity which he had purposed to overthrow. It is well known that Thomas Paine, the author of the "Age of Reason," declared his regret that he ever published that infidel book, and avowed, on his death-bed, his intention to publish another to refute it, and in favor of Divine revelation.

Voltaire, in spite of all that he had written on the subject of Anti-christianity, sought to calm the clamors of his guilty dread of the eternal future, by attending

to the ordinances of religion before he died. Newport, when tossing on his dying-bed, said, turning to the fire in the chamber where he met his fate: "O that I could lie on that fire, and burn for a hundred thousand years, if it would purchase for me the favor of God;" and when expiring, he uttered a groan that could scarcely be conceived to be human, saying, "O the pangs! the unsufferable pangs of hell and damnation! O eternity! eternity! who can paraphrase the words for ever and for ever?" And even the gay young noble Altamont, ere he departed, would have struggled with a Christian martyr for his stake, and have blessed heaven for the flame that was not an eternal flame; and fierce as he feared the unquenchable fire of his future hell would be, lifting his eyes to his forfeited heaven and to an angry God, he said, "Hell itself would be a refuge, if it would hide me from thy frown!"

And what shall we more say? The consolations of the Scriptures have proved sufficient to sustain the minds of Christians under the influence of the most violent persecution: "Looking for the blessed hope" of immortality, when the world sought to fascinate with her smiles, they have been steady to their purpose; when she tried the influence of her frowns, they remained unmoved; when bigotry forged its fetters, and intolerance reared its gibbets, and persecution heated its furnaces and kindled its fires, they said, "None of

these things move me," nor all of them put together, "for I count not my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy." One man said: "With the Bible in my hand, and Christ in my heart, and heaven in my view, let wheels torture me, let swords pierce me, let lions devour me, let crosses suspend me, let flames consume me: in all these things I am more than conqueror through Him that loved me:"

"To Him my eye of faith I turn,  
And through the fire pursue my way:  
The fire forgets its power to burn,  
The lambent flames around me play:  
I own His power, accept the sign,  
And shout to prove the Saviour mine."

These are a few of the evidences of the truth of the doctrine of a future state. It is necessary to solve the mysteries of Providence; it is requisite to complete human happiness; it is desirable to all virtuous minds; and it is considered probable in the highest degree, and generally believed by heathens, where the Bible is unknown. Thus much the light of nature and human reason teach; and when we turn to the Scriptures for additional information on the subject of a future state, here it is revealed as with a sunbeam! here it is announced, demonstrated, illustrated! Every cloud is dispersed, and every shadow fled: "Life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel." And although

much of the glory of future happiness is yet to be revealed, yet sufficient is made known to accomplish the purposes of man's present and eternal salvation. How momentous are these truths!

“How great the bliss, how great the woe,  
Hang on this point of time below!  
On this precarious breath!”

How little it matters whether we are affluent or indigent on earth, whether we are honored or despised by men, if we are honored of God, and get safe to heaven; for this I say—the time is short, and eternity's here! But, O! it matters whether we associate with angels or fiends in a future state; whether we ascend to heaven, or sink to hell! Let us resolve, by grace, to live for future glory. Let us labor for an eternal destiny in the heaven of heavens. “Looking for that blessed hope” of glorious immortality! Even so, Amen.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE BETTER COUNTRY.

“Now they desire a better country.”—HEB. xi. 16.

HAVING shown that the present evil world is not such as to render it at all desirable as the place of our perpetual residence, and having adduced an amount of evidence sufficient, we hope, to produce in your mind a settled conviction of the truth of the doctrine of a future state, let us now direct our contemplations to a brief geographical survey of the better land. We say *better land*, because the same source whence we derive information on the subject of the glories which God hath laid up in the land of light and life for the righteous, supplies equally ample evidence of the torments that await the wicked in the region of darkness and death. We might lead you away to far-off regions on the left hand, in the future state: we might conduct you to thunderings and lightnings and horrible tempests, to blackness and darkness, to weeping and wailing and

gnashing of teeth : we might show you the place where the beast and the false prophet are, and the devil and his angels, and all the nations that forget God ; but we invite your attention to a happier clime, to the right-hand region, the glory land : let us “go up into the country,” and explore the celestial regions of immortality. Laying aside every weight, let us attempt, at least, to climb and cross the bright-topped hills, wend our way through the verdant plains, and inhale the fragrant odors of this “garden of the Lord.” Passing through the woods, as they wave in luxuriance and grace to the winds, and bend with rich fruits to the breezes of heaven, we penetrate the glorious interior of the “better land,”

“Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,  
Amid the verdant landscape glow.”

What groves of glory are here! what fruits and flowers! what sights! what sounds! How indescribable is the happiness which we feel while we sit beneath the blissful bowers of this second Eden! How refreshing are these crystal streams! How charming are the songs of these birds of Paradise! How sweet are these lilies and roses of immortality! What a delightful land is here! Observe,

1. *Its name.*

“The Paradise of God.” Rev. ii. 7.



Standing on Pisgah's height, and looking through the bright vista of revelation with the telescope of faith, we discover the capital of the better country, the great metropolis of all worlds, with this inscription over its pearly gates—"THE PARADISE OF GOD." The place of future felicity is known among the Churches by the name of the "inheritance of the saints in light." It is sought by the Christian pilgrim as "The Holy City." It is inquired for by the "Israelite indeed" as the Celestial Canaan, the Promised Land, and the New Jerusalem, or "The rest that remaineth to the people of God." By the spiritual emigrant it is desired as a "better country." To all that are weary of earth, and have sought a preparation for it, it is "Heaven," the "Kingdom of Heaven," the "Heaven of Heavens." To all the renewed sons of Adam it is "Paradise;" and, to distinguish it from the first Paradise of man, it is called in the Scriptures, "The Paradise of God."

## 2. *Its locality.*

"The upright shall dwell in thy presence." Psalm cxl. 13.

That there is a special locality prepared in some part of God's boundless dominions for the residence of the "general assembly and Church of the first-born," and which is distinguished in the Scriptures from every other place as "The Kingdom of Heaven," will not be denied by those who make any profession of the Chris-

tian religion. Hence the words of our Saviour to his disciples—"I go to prepare a *place* for you."

The question with many is this: "In what part of Jehovah's vast empire are we to expect to find our Father's house with many mansions?" To what point of the compass are we to look for "The city of habitation, whose builder and maker is God?" Where is the geographical position of "The better country," of which we think so much and speak so often? Now, on this subject we are not permitted to speak definitely, because it is a subject on which the Scriptures are almost silent. The only idea which we are permitted to gather from revelation as to the special locality of the heaven of heavens is that of *ascension*. Celestial visitors are represented as *descending* from heaven to earth, and, on their return to their native abode of blessedness, they are said to ascend from earth to heaven.

But still there is a difficulty to philosophic and scientific minds connected with the subject of the special locality of the region of glory. To the inhabitants of a revolving globe like ours, with its diurnal and annual motions, that point in the expanse of space that was eastward in the morning is westward at night—the locality of the sun, for example: that which is southward at midsummer is northward at Christmas, and that which is vertical at the equator is only to be seen in oblique and opposite directions at the poles—suffici-

ent reasons why the special locality of the Paradise of God, as to east or west, north or south, is not revealed to us.

Granted that it has not been deemed expedient by the unerring Spirit of God to point out the particular spot on the map of the universe where the promised land is situate, and that consequently we know not the degrees of the latitude and longitude of the better country whither we go, still we know something which it is infinitely more important to ascertain. We know it is beautiful for situation, the joy of the universe of God. We know it to be the most delightful region in Jehovah's boundless empire, and the glory of his illimitable dominions. It is the place where Deity dwells: "He hath chosen it for his habitation." It is the perpetual residence of Jehovah: "This is my rest for ever," saith the Lord; "here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

It is the place where God vouchsafes to his intelligent and holy creatures the most glorious displays of his infinite and Divine perfections: where he reigns in all the splendor of his majesty and in all the allurements of his love, and where he is adored by the numberless millions of his glorified creatures. "The upright shall dwell in his presence:" this, gracious Lord, is enough: "For in thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." "Blessed are the pure in

heart, for they shall see God!" his children can ask no more :

"We shall behold his glorious face,  
And stand complete in righteousness."

"For I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and God himself shall dwell among them ; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

It is the place where Jesus is ; where the glorified humanity of Christ appears ; where "the Lamb, as it had been slain," is seen, and worshipped, and adored. It is sufficient for the servant to be with his master, and for the disciple to dwell for ever with his Lord. And so it will be : "For where I am," says Christ, "there shall ye be also." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be *with me where I am*, that they may behold my glory." It is the place where angels "tune their harps," and swell the anthems of redemption. And it is the place where all the ransomed millions of saints thunder the deep choruses of heaven : where "bursting joys the notes prolong, and hallelujahs crown the song" of "glory to the bleeding Lamb." We will conclude this section by the insertion of a most beautiful poem on the subject, entitled, "The Better Land," by Mrs. Hemans. It describes the spiritual inquiries of a devoutly disposed child at the feet of a pious and enlightened mother, saying :

“I hear thee speak of a better land,  
 Thou callest its children a happy band:  
 Mother, O! where is that radiant shore?  
 Shall we not seek it, and weep no more?  
 Is it where the flower of the orange blows?  
 Or fire-flies glance through the myrtle boughs?”  
 ‘Not there, not there, my child.’

‘Is it where the feathery palm-trees rise?  
 And the date grows ripe under sunny skies?  
 Or amidst the green island of glittering seas,  
 Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze,  
 And strange bright birds on their starry wings  
 Bear the rich hues of all glorious things?’  
 ‘Not there, not there, my child.’

‘Is it far away in some region old,  
 Where the rivers wander o’er sands of gold;  
 Where the burning rays of the ruby shine;  
 And the diamond lights up the secret mine;  
 And the pearl gleams forth from the coral strand;  
 Is it there, sweet mother, that better land?’  
 ‘Not there, not there, my child.’

Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy;  
 Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy;  
 Dreams cannot picture a world so fair;  
 For sorrow and death may not enter there!  
 Time doth not breathe on its fadeless bloom:  
 Far beyond the clouds, and beyond the tomb,  
 It is there, it is there, my child!”

Yes, it is there where Deity dwells! O! it is there  
 where Jesus is! It is there, it is there, where the an-  
 gels sing, and the saints of God behold their king!  
 East or west, north or south, ’tis the same to me: “’Tis  
 the land of the *holy*, the *happy*, the *free*!”

3 *Its climate.*

4\*



"The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." Isa. xxxiii. 24.

Wherever the "holy land" is situate, its climate is every way suited to the perfect enjoyment and perpetual preservation of its population. Its atmosphere is always dry without drought, and genial without excessive heat. It is cooling without clouds, and bracing without cold. There are no drenching rains, no pelting hails, no piercing frosts, or drifting snows: "December is pleasant as May." Thunders peal not, vivid lightnings flash not, in that bright world. No desolating winds drive restless influences across its peaceful plains and hills: weary and worn out with the work of time, these are all hushed to rest in stillness undisturbed, and sleep for ever in their treasury. No storms are there to agitate its crystal seas, or furious tempests tossing its pacific oceans: all is "quietness and assurance for ever." Its air is sweeter, and purer, and milder than the ether in Eden. It is more genial, salubrious, and healthy than that which man, in perfect innocence and goodness, breathed in Paradise the first. The mists and fogs and clouds of time are dispelled and scattered before they ever reach the genial regions of eternity:

"No chilling winds or poisonous breath  
Can reach that healthful shore:  
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,  
Are felt and feared no more."



“And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.”  
“And there is no night there.” It is a country where  
“the sun goeth not down, neither doth the moon withdraw her shining.” It is radiant with constellations of stars of the first magnitude and glory, that shine in celestial splendor for ever and ever. No darkness dims the brightness of its “sevenfold” sunlight: no shades o’ercast the shining lustre of its expansive firmament: no gloom obscures the glistening glory of its cloudless sky. It is always day, bright, meridian, everlasting Sabbath day!

And as to its seasons, these are perennial. The withering influences and decay of fading autumn are not felt at all in that land of life and immortality. The dreary aspect and desolating effects of sterile, hoary winter, are never seen in the genial clime where grow the fruits and flowers of the Paradise of God. Spring blooms eternally: it is always April and May!

“There everlasting spring abides,  
And never-withering flowers.”

Nay, more: “It is one fruitful, glorious, and everlasting summer—midsummer all the year round.”

“There everlasting summer yields  
The ripe abundance of celestial fields.”

What a delightful region is this! No wonder the patriarchs hoped for it, the poets sang of it, and the

prophets desired it. How healthy is this climate! The inhabitant says not, I am sick.

4. *Its productions.*

"And on either side of the river was there the tree of life." Rev. xxii. 2.

It is not too much to say of the "better land," that the noxious weeds and thistle-stings of this desert never grow there; and that the mourning cypresses, the weeping-willows, and bitter herbs, and briers and thorns of this waste-howling wilderness, are not found at all in that happy Eden of supreme delight; "for there shall be no more curse." It is the country where the Rose of Sharon grows, and the Lily of the Valley blooms; and the Plant of Renown luxuriates there. To attempt a description of all its orchards of pomegranates and camphire, with spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh, and all chief spices, would be only to darken counsel with words without knowledge. To say that the pine tree, and the fir tree, and the box tree flourish there; and that the cedar and the fig, and the vine trees of Scripture, strike deep root in the genial and rich soil of this Eden in the skies, is to say but little indeed. O for inspiration to enable us to suitably dwell on this heavenly theme! "Awake, O, north wind! come thou south, and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."

To represent it as a land of corn—"the finest of the wheat," and wine—"the pure blood of the grape;" to speak of bundles of figs, and grapes in the cluster, of butter of kine, and milk of sheep, and fat of rams, would convey very imperfect ideas of its exquisite productions, and its profusions of celestial good. The chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills, are found in great abundance there. Trees of righteousness grow there: the branch of his planting, and "the work of his hands, who is King, that he may be glorified." Truth springs up as the grass, and holiness abounds as the forest leaves in all the loveliness of perennial spring. Salvation is brought forth abundantly; and happiness, joy, and praise spring forth speedily, and bloom eternally: "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations." And if this be true of the wilderness, what may we not expect in the celestial Canaan? For if such are the fruits of the desert, what will Paradise produce—the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness?

"There generous fruits, that never fail,  
On trees immortal grow;  
And rocks and hills, and brooks and vales,  
With milk and honey flow."

It abounds with the bread of life. In eastern poetry,

they tell of a wondrous tree on which grew "golden apples and silver bells ; and every time the breeze went by, and tossed the fragrant branches, a shower of these golden apples fell, and the living bells chimed forth their airy ravishment." But the revealed realities of heaven exceed the poet's loftiest imaginings. Here is the tree on which life grows. The broad-based mountains and majestic hills of the better land are covered with the life-tree, which is so plentiful and abundant, that it grows in the street. "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, is the tree of life"—for aught we know to the contrary, whole forests of the tree of life, bending with fragrant fruit, and waving their luxuriant branches to the soft breezes of the winds of heaven. Secure from the gunshot of the enemy, and beyond the reach of the fowler's snare, the birds of paradise build their nests among the evergreen foliage of these woods and groves of immortality ; and here they plume their wings, and ply their peaceful pinions ; or, perched on the branches of the tree of life, they sit securely to indulge their songs.

Its flowery fields and dewy meadows are enriched with the winding streams of "the pure river of the water of life : " "for there is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God." And besides this river of life, there is the crystal sea, with its coral strand and pearly shore, and pure deep waters of perpetual bliss. In the

crystallography of heaven, we read of the jasper, the sapphire, the chalcedony, and the emerald, the sardonyx, the sardius, the chrysolyte, the beryl, and the topaz, the chrysoprasus, the jacinth, and the amethyst; and of pearls and precious jewels, which are abundant as the waves of the ocean and the sands of the sea. And as to its precious metals, there is, it would seem, an abundance of fine gold, and the like, that dazzles ten thousand Perus, and Ophirs, and Californias, into the shades of everlasting darkness, when viewed in comparison with its glittering regions.

5. *Its extent.*

"And yet there is room." Luke xiv. 22.

We are not aware that the Scriptures furnish any definite information as to the geographical extent of the "Promised Land;" yet we infer from the various figurative representations contained in the "holy oracles of God," and from the language made use of by the sacred writers to describe it, that there is ample inheritance for every son and daughter of Adam. Viewed as our "Father's house," it has "many mansions;" sufficiently commodious for the "household of faith, and the family of God." Contemplated as a "city of habitation," its dimensions are spacious enough to accommodate "the nations of them that are saved, of every kindred, and people, and tongue." When spoken of as "a country," it is always represented, in length and



breadth, as being equal to all the wants and wishes of the wandering Jews—as a final resting-place ; and such as to afford every man of the numberless tribes of Jacob an extent of possession that will render it impossible for “Ephraim to envy Judah, or for Judah to vex Ephraim.” And without leaving a single hoof behind “on this side Jordan,” of all the renewed seed of Adam, the thousands of Israel will each say for ever of the riches of his inheritance, “The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places ; yea, I have a goodly heritage.”

Unlike the earthly Canaan, confined within narrow limits, and whose privileges were confined to the Jews, this Canaan of the skies affords ample range of country for the permanent settlement of the Gentiles also. It is certain that although the “isles shall wait for the law” of Christ, and the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto him ; though his name shall be great from the east to the west ; though the north shall give up, and the south shall not keep back ; though he shall have the “heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession,” and, with the fulness of the Gentiles, “all Israel shall be saved ;” yet the capabilities of the “Better Land” are such as to afford

“Enough for all, enough for each,  
Enough for evermore.”

Though streaming tides of emigration to this country



set in from every point of the compass, nearly six thousand years ago, "there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed;" and when many generations after this, of the wise and the good of all nations, shall have made a safe passage thither, it shall be said, "Yet there is room." Yes, until the last wayworn traveller has found "rest at home," and the last mariner has run safe, after many a battle and breeze, into port, it shall be said, "There's room for more." It is vast as infinity, wide as immensity, and long as eternity. Of the Divine Governor of this happy land it is said,

"Ten thousand saints his name adore,  
But still he cries, There's room for more."

#### 6. *Its capital.*

"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."  
Ps. lxxxvii. 4.

In allusion to Jerusalem, the ancient metropolis of Judea, the capital of the "Better Country" is called "The New Jerusalem, the Holy City." Exalted high above the clouds, and situate far beyond the glittering stars of God, is the celestial city. The splendors of the magnificent capital of the glory land are such, that no tongue can tell them, no colors paint them, no figures represent them: it mocks all the efforts of men or angels to sketch the brilliancy of its glory, and beggars all description. The plan of it is foursquare, and the length, and the breadth, and the height of it, are equal. Ac-

according to St. John's figurative representation, the dimensions of it are fifteen hundred miles square ; or, in other words, it covers a superficial extent of two millions and two hundred and fifty thousand square miles, being 1,430,000,000 acres.

The imperishable substance of which it is composed is "pure gold, like unto clear glass." The design of it originated in the mind of infallible Deity. Infinite skill sketched out the plan of it, Divine benevolence supplied the materials of it, and Omnipotent power hewed out its pillars, and formed the whole of its massive architecture : "Its builder and maker is God." It rears its splendid towers above the highest of the everlasting hills, and has its foundations among the immovable mountains of eternity ; and, based on the Rock of Ages, it cannot be moved, while

"Life, or thought, or being last,  
Or immortality endures."

It is surrounded with "a jasper wall, great and high, and has twelve gates, and at the twelve gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." It is arranged and constructed so as to accommodate the streaming tides of population which flow in perpetual currents, from every point of the compass in the wilderness, to the promised land : "On the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and

on the west three gates : for they shall come from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, in the kingdom of God."

"And the wall of the city hath twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" are inscribed. "And the foundations of the wall of the city are garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation is of jasper ; the second sapphire ; the third a chalcedony ; the fourth an emerald ; the fifth sardonyx ; the sixth sardius ; the seventh chrysolyte ; the eighth beryl ; the ninth a topaz ; the tenth a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh a jacinth ; and the twelfth an amethyst. And the building of the wall of it is of jasper ; and the twelve gates are twelve pearls : every several gate is of one pearl ; and the street of the city is pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And the city has no need of the sun, neither the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it ; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." "And the gates of it are not shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there."

It is supplied in every part by crystal "fountains of living water," which are kept full and flowing by the "pure river of the water of life, proceeding out of the

throne of God and the Lamb," and which purls in peaceful and plenteous streams through the centre of the celestial city. "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, is the tree of life," bending with all the fruits of bliss immortal. "And there is no complaining in the streets;" for men drink angels' nectar, and eat archangels' food, and hunger not, nor thirst, nor die.

It is the seat of Divine government, where the King of glory sways his sceptre, and the princes of Paradise hold their court: "For the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him. And they see his face, and his name is written on their foreheads. And blessed are they that enter through the gates into the city." Such is the city of habitation, which God hath prepared for those who seek "a better country."

#### 7. *Its resources.*

"All my springs are in thee." Ps. lxxxvii. 7.

From what we have seen and heard already of the celestial regions, we may justly infer that its resources are vast as infinity, and durable as eternity. Its supplies are suitable, and its stores inexhaustible. Its wealth is in mines that are deep, diverse, during, and unfathomable. They never run out. Here are riches in mints that cannot be expended; gold in coin that never perishes with using; and treasure laid up in

bags that have no holes in them. Its specie is kept in coffers that never wax old; sunk in funds that are never exhausted; and invested in banks that never fail. Thieves cannot steal, rust cannot corrupt, nor canker destroy this gold. What a California is here!

Unlike the threadbare garments of time, the immortal robes of eternity remain unimpaired with wearing; and its celestial costumes improve and brighten with use into the splendors of ever-during bloom. The garments of those who dwell there are "white as the light," and retain their elegance unsullied by filth, and their texture undestroyed by moths. Its crystal fountains are ever full, and its deep broad river ever flows. Its nether and its upper springs are never dry, never low, and its refreshing streams of living water fail not. Its valleys long and wide, stand thick with corn; fruitful hills rejoice on every side; and its fair fertile fields wave their golden crops, and bend with ripe abundance, before the breezes of heaven, the year about: "They shout for joy; they also sing." Its teeming and fragrant fruits hang ripened on the "tree of life," which yields its rich produce every month, and its perpetual year is crowned with plenty.

How many millions of worlds are made tributary to it we know not, but "the kings of the earth bring their glory and their honor into it; and they shall bring into it the honor and glory of the nations." But though the



universe may contribute its boundless garners of good for the enjoyment of the inhabitants of heaven, it is absolutely independent of all worlds for the perpetuity of its glory and good. Its resources are in its King ; hence the acknowledgment of each of its numberless millions of ransomed ones : "All my springs are in thee :—" "For whom have I in heaven but thee?" or what, even there, do I "desire besides thee?"

And if new pleasures, and millions of blessings, were required every moment of endless duration, to complete the bliss of the redeemed in glory, at the omnipotent fiat of Jehovah, they would be created in a moment. He has only to utter his voice, and say, "Let them be," and new joys spring up in endless variety and ceaseless succession. "How happy are the people who are in such a state! yea, blessed is the people whose God is the Lord."

#### 8. *Its security.*

"Israel then shall dwell in safety." Deut. xxxiii. 28.

However exalted our ideas of Immanuel's land may be, it is gratifying to learn "that upon all the glory there shall be a defence," and that all is quietness and assurance for ever. It is subject to no contingencies : all its affairs are "well-ordered, and sure." Every thing is guarded securely from accident, and safe from misfortune. No dangers threaten it, no perils come nigh it : calamities are kept at an unapproachable dis-



tance ; and disasters are utterly unknown through the length and breadth of this perfect "Palestine." No birds of ill-omen or beasts of prey are there, or poisonous reptiles. The brood of serpents, the generation of vipers, the hole of the asp, and the cockatrice's den, are not found there. The prowling bear, the ravening wolf, the wolf in sheep's clothing, and "the roaring lion," hurt not, nor destroy, in all its holy mountains. "No lion shall be there, or ravenous beast go up thereon." And "without are dogs."

The tongue of slander is never heard ; and the whisperer, and the busybody in other men's matters, and the tale-bearer, have no inheritance there. Backbiters never blacken the character of the innocent, and falsehood cannot blast the fair reputation of the pure in heart, who dwell there. Calumny is silenced for ever, and reproach and contumely hide their hydra-heads in other regions. Drunkenness never disturbs its holy quietude, and lewdness never pollutes the place. Violence is not heard in all the land, nor wasting and destruction seen in all its borders. All its officers are peace, and its exactors righteousness. Oppressors have no portion in this land of uprightness : "It is far from oppression." Peculations and frauds, and thefts and murders, or any other deeds of darkness, are never committed in that land of light. Hence castles of confinement, prisons of punishment, and houses of correction,

and watchmen, and man-catchers, and fetters, and scourges, and gibbets, are not there ; and there is no penal settlement.

Instruments of torture, weapons of destruction, and defensive armor, are never used or seen. Swords and spears, and chariots of war, and armies, and navies, are not wanted there ; for the voice of contention, the bickerings of strife, the shout of battle, the trump of war, the roaring of cannon, and the thunder of artillery, are not heard from generation to generation, in the wide dominions of the Prince of Peace. It is possessed by a people who have beaten their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and they will "learn war no more."

It is perfectly secure from *internal* disaffection. Insurrection can never obtain, not even in thought ; for all are perfectly satisfied. The Sovereign is satisfied with all his subjects, and all his subjects are happy in each other, and joyful in their King. From the high archangel to the humblest saint, the acclamation is universal : "Just and true art thou in all thy ways, O King of saints." One song employs all nations of the saved, and all cry : "Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us."

It is perfectly secure from all *external* foes. Though a thousand fleets of spiritual pirates should engage in crusading against it, not one of the expedition could

reach its distant coast: not one could land upon its holy and protected shore. Its frontier is securely guarded, and strongly fortified: the great gulf that separates it from the enemy's country is immovably fixed, and eternally impassable. If ten thousand Alexanders, and Cæsars, and Pompeys, and Pharaohs, with their armies, and all the hosts infernal, should conspire in one vast confederacy to invade it; and earth and hell should march up their dark legions against it, with Satan, the black prince of perdition, at their head; then, "He that sitteth in the heavens would laugh," (at their fruitless efforts to cross its alpine mountains,) and "the Most High would hold them in derision." Its invulnerable bulwarks are such as to defy all the cannonade and bombshells of the enemy to carry the torch of mischief, and the fiery darts of destruction, within its borders.

No enemy can reach it, and if he could reach it, he could not enter it: its walls are too high to scale, and too hard to penetrate. They would weary the wings of Apollyon before he had got half over them, and wear out all of his battering-rams and infernal machines, before he had got half through them. No foe can enter it; and if he could enter, he could not conquer it. It is a garrison of illustrious heroes, of mighty warriors, of brave champions; they are "more than conquerors;" these, valiant in fight, and expert in battle, would

smite the enemy, hip and thigh, until he was utterly overthrown: "One should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." And if it were possible that even these should fail to repulse the foe and defend the country from foreign invasion, still its peace could never be disturbed, its pleasures could never be interrupted, and its prosperity could never be destroyed; because "the eternal God is the refuge of them" who dwell there, "Israel shall dwell in safety," "a people saved of the Lord."

"O land of the holy, the happy, the free,  
At last may thy portals be open to me."

How expressive is the name of the better country! How delightful the locality; how salubrious the climate; how rich the produce; how ample the extent; how glorious the capital; how abundant the resources; and how secure the defences of the glory land! How blessed are the people of the Paradise of God! Have you any inheritance there? Is your treasure in heaven? Your chief good, is it there? Have you set your heart on things above? Are you living for an inheritance in glory? Do you pray, believe, and hope for a lot among the glorified redeemed? Will you give up this world for the better country? Are you prepared for heaven? Are you preparing for it? Are you willing to live for it, to suffer for it, to die for it? It is worth your while

to suffer a thousand deaths for the ultimate enjoyment of this everlasting life. It is offered to you ; it is within your reach ! You are invited to it ; you may go and welcome. Will you go ? May God grant you this grace, for Christ's sake. Amen.

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## CHAPTER IV.

## THE GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN.

“Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty.”—ISAIAH xxxiii. 17.

THE attributes and perfections of the King of glory, and the relation in which he stands to his creatures, render him the object of supreme affection, unbounded confidence, and unspeakable delight to the “general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven.” And having supplied the best information in our possession on the “Better Country” itself, we will now endeavor to interest and profit you with a more particular account of its most gracious Sovereign. For, much as we may expect hereafter to be blessed as to the place of our final destiny, it is from uninterrupted fellowship and communion with God that we shall receive and enjoy our highest degree of felicity: “Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.” Observe,

1. *His illustrious titles.*



“KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” Rev. xix. 16.

The various magnificent titles by which the King of glory has been pleased to reveal himself to his people are all expressive of his nature, his attributes, his perfections, or of the relation in which he stands to men and things. He is known amongst his intelligent creatures in this world by the name of “God ;” which signifies “good,” or the “good one ;” as it is written, “There is none good save one, that is God.” In various parts of the holy oracles, he is called “Lord,” which means “a ruler ;” and, to show his supremacy, he is designated in the Scriptures, “The Lord of lords.” He is also called “Jehovah,” which means, “I was, I am, and I shall be.” “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, which is, and which was, and which is to come.” We also frequently meet with the words, “Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” in the Scriptures ; and these three, though distinct persons, are one God : “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.” He is called our Maker, our Preserver, our Deliverer, our Redeemer, and our Saviour ; distinctions these of the most endearing character, and expressive of the amazing interest which he takes in our present, future, and eternal welfare. “Blessed be his glorious name for ever.”

2. *His glorious majesty.*

“I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty.”  
Ps. cxlv. 5.

Nothing, in point of grandeur, can exceed the scriptural representation of the glorious majesty of Him "whose kingdom ruleth over all ;" nothing can equal it. Do the inspired penmen speak of the majesty of his *personal aspect*? how elevated is their language! "He is clothed with honor and with majesty." "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written : KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS!" The *palace* of this glorious King is transcendently magnificent ; blazing forth in celestial splendor and inaccessible glory : "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." "And behold a throne was set in heaven," "*a glorious high throne.*" "And he that sat was, to look upon, like a jasper and a sardine stone. And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." And as to his *celestial court*, his attendants are crowned heads : "And round about the throne were four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment ; and they had on their heads crowns of gold."

Now, although the Divine Sovereign of the celestial regions has been pleased to reveal the glorious honor of his majesty in such language and by such figures as earthly grandeur and human glories suggest, yet we must ever remember that this kind of language is made use of to accommodate our inability to comprehend the spirituality of his Divine nature, and, consequently, it must generally be understood in a figurative sense ; for "God

is a Spirit,"—the Father of spirits. And although, in our present imperfect state, we may be at some loss to comprehend the mode of his existence, and the manner of his revealing the glories of his Divine nature to the enraptured vision of his glorified spiritual creatures in heaven, yet one thing is certain, "The pure in heart shall see God." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

3. *His universal presence.*

"Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?"  
Jer. xxiii. 24.

Sensible of the all-pervading presence of the universal Sovereign, the Psalmist inquires: "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." No mountain is so high, no glen so deep, no desert so remote, that his presence is not felt there. His eye is on every herb that grows, his hand is on every flower that blooms, his arm sustains every orb that shines, and his foot is on every ocean-wave that rolls. He fills immensity.

"O ye afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted," who "in the cloudy and dark day" have said, "Whither is my beloved gone?"—safely arrived in his kingdom, and once ushered into his glorious presence, ye shall no

more mourn an absent God. He will no more hide his face from you, neither forsake you for "a small moment." "For my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord."

4. *His infinite wisdom.*

"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. ii. 3.

If we escape from the suffering which springs from the wickedness of our depraved fellow-creatures in this world, we often have to suffer on account of their weakness. Like ourselves, they are short-sighted mortals, liable to mistake ; "for to err is human ;" and an error in judgment will necessarily lead to error in practice. But the "King of glory" is too wise to err. He can look into men's hearts, discern spirits, detect desires, understand intentions, interpret thoughts, and read motives : "He searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins of the children of men." He knows all things, and forgets nothing, except, in a sense, the transgressions of his pardoned people : "For their sins and iniquities he will remember no more." The second thoughts of men are often wiser than their first ; but he can see the end from the beginning at a glance : "his understanding is infinite." Hence he has nothing to reconsider, nothing to modify, nothing to change, nothing to improve : "his work is perfect."

The wisdom of Plato, Socrates, and Solomon was folly

compared with his ; for “in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” What a source of immortal happiness to the redeemed in heaven is the wisdom and knowledge of the Most High ! For if they that walk with wise men on earth shall be wise, what acquisitions in knowledge of men and things, of the Creator and his wonderful works, shall we receive when we walk and talk with God in heaven !

5. *His almighty power.*

“The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” Rev. xix. 6.

He hath all power, both in heaven and upon earth. Among the gods there is none like unto him : “He stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, spreadeth them forth as a tent to dwell in, and meteth them out with a span.” “He weigheth the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance ; and taketh up the isles as a very little thing.” “He holds the winds in his fist, and he measures out the waters in the hollow of his hand.” Earth and air obey him, and fire and water hearken to the voice of his word. He spake, and the universe was made : he commanded, and it stood fast. How happy are they who are sheltered beneath the protection of his broad shield ! How superior to every enemy are they who have such an almighty Friend ! “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ?” No weapon that is formed against him, or against his people’s return to the better land, shall prosper ; no scheme



to prevent their safe passage through the wilderness shall succeed :

“ By death and hell pursued in vain,  
To heaven his ransomed seed shall come,  
Shouting their heavenly Canaan gain,  
And pass through death triumphant home.”

6. *His perfect holiness.*

“ Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.” Isa. vi. 3.

Holiness is the girdle of his loins, and spotless purity is the girdle of his reins. He cannot look upon sin, or behold iniquity. Every species of impurity is abhorrent to his nature. His immaculate holiness is such, that the heavens are unclean in his sight ; and he charged his angels with folly. His name is “ Holy,” “ Most Holy.” The holiest of angels in heaven veil their faces with their wings, as they approach his footstool ; and cherubim and seraphim rest not day and night, saying, “ Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.” Now it is for holiness that the Christian on earth hungers and thirsts ; it is for purity of heart that he pants as the “ hart for the water-brooks ;” what, then, will be his satisfaction in heaven, where he shall enjoy the most intimate fellowship and communion with Him whose place of abode is “ the holy of holies ;” where, free from the filthy conversation of the wicked, it will be his happiness to drink at the fountain-head of celestial purity and Divine holiness for ever ?



“O glorious hour! O blest abode!  
I shall be near and like my God;  
And flesh and sin no more control  
The sacred pleasures of my soul.”

7. *His impartial justice.*

“Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”

Rev. xv. 3.

Among the many important things that are revealed of the rectitude of the Divine character, it is written, “Just and right is He.” He is not like the corrupt and corruptible judges of the earth, “which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him.” He knows no respect of persons or circumstances: character is every thing with him. He is beyond the reach of threatening, and superior to reward. He scorns fees, and abhors bribes, and “renders unto every man according to his works.” He justifies the innocent, and will by “no means clear the guilty.” O ye suffering sons of earth! commit your cause to the King of heaven; make your appeals to his righteous tribunal! He will right all your wrongs, redress all your grievances, and shield you from injustice and oppression for ever.

What an asylum of peace to the distressed are his celestial dominions! what a refuge of safety to his persecuted people! what a sanctuary of justice to his suffering saints! They shall have a fair hearing in his court, for “He sitteth in the throne judging right.” There will

be no triumphing of might over right at his bar. He will bring forth their "righteousness as the light, and their judgment as the noonday." Flee for protection, ye sufferers, to his heavenly dominions; there is the city of refuge! Safety is there! and all are free—for ever free! For God is Judge himself. Hear this, ye persecuted ones: your witness is in heaven, and your record is on high: impartial justice is there: "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

8. *His universal benevolence.*

"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." Ps. cxlv. 9.

From the highest created intelligence that attends his throne in heaven, to the lowest particle of animated matter wherein is the breath of life on earth, his disinterested benevolence extends itself. He is infinitely pleased with the workmanship of his own hands. He neglects nothing that he has created, and despises nothing that has a conscious being. He takes care for his oxen and sheep, and provides for his horses and cattle. He adapts the mighty deep to his family of fishes, and feeds all the fowls of the mountains, which sing among the branches: "These all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season." The goodness, mercy, and redeeming love of God to man have been such that, merely adverting to them here, we shall call your attention to each of them hereafter; for all things are or-

dered or overruled in such a way as to work together for his good. And with respect to angels who have kept their first estate, these, being brought up with him, are daily his delight. His beneficence to his creatures is co-extensive with animate existence : "His tender mercies are over all his works."

How interesting it would be to be associated with such benevolent spirits as the immortal Howard and other philanthropists, the object of whose life was to attend to the neglected, to remember the forgotten, and care for the forsaken ; whose very existence was devoted to the work of wiping tears away, of soothing sorrows, and binding up broken hearts ! The tears of compassion that gush and glisten in the eyes of disinterested benevolence are the brightest of earth's precious jewels :

"No radiant pearl that crested fortune wears,  
Or gem, that sparkling hangs from beauty's ears  
Not the bright stars that night's blue arch adorn,  
Nor rising sun that gilds the vernal morn,  
Shine with such lustre as the tear that breaks,  
For others' woe, down virtue's manly cheeks."

What, then, must it be to feel ourselves the objects of Divine benevolence ? for the most exquisite sensibilities and sympathies of men on earth are infinitely surpassed by the melting compassion of heaven's benevolent King : "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits : who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all

thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

9. *His immutable faithfulness.*

"The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Heb. xiii. 8.

When we reflect on the infinite perfections of Zion's King, and remember his moral attributes, we find a summary of excellences that beggars description. Here is infinite goodness to dispose him to do good to his creatures ; infinite wisdom to devise means ; and infinite might to accomplish all his purposes ; and we have only to add that he is immutable, and then it will be evident that the happiness of his ransomed people is perfect. He is "the faithful and true witness," ever mindful of his covenant : "For who ever trusted in him, and was confounded?" "Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised : there hath not failed one word of all his good promises, which he promised," is the simultaneous acknowledgment of every subject in his blessed dominions. They shout to us over the river of death, as we are toiling our way through the wilderness : "Faithful is he that hath promised." "Heaven and earth may pass away," but his word "endureth for ever." True, every tittle ; faithful, every jot.

And he is not merely true to all his engagements,

but immutable: "With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." He now is what he has ever been, all-pervading, all-wise, almighty; and he always will be what he is now—perfect in holiness, impartial in justice, universal in benevolence, and abundant in mercy, goodness, and truth. If it were possible for him to be otherwise in his attributes, perfections, and relations, than as he is, how awful would such a contingency be; but, hallelujah! "He *changeth* not!" Changeless amid the world's mutation, unaltered and unalterable amid the changing scenes of the mutable universe, "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." There will be "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," but no new Governor in them. We shall have the same gracious and glorious King, world without end. He now reigns whose right it is, and not only by right, but by universal consent and acclamation of all his subjects. "From everlasting God is King in Zion," "and he shall reign for ever and ever." Happy in himself, and blessed by all the nations of them that are saved, he will be the same "God over all, blessed for evermore."

10. *His distinguishing goodness to mankind.*

"O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."  
Ps. cvii. 21.

Although the Lord is good to all his creatures, from



the meanest reptile that creeps in the dust, to the shining seraph that stands before his throne, yet to man he has evinced a more special and præminent regard, as will be manifestly seen in his works of creation and providence, redemption and grace. Let us contemplate,

(1.) *His favors conferred upon man in creation.*

“Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.” Ps. viii. 5.

Man was made to enjoy happiness. His Maker endowed him with all terrestrial things to subserve his pleasure. The sun lighted up its fires for his convenience; and the moon hung pendent in the heavens to contribute to his enjoyment. The stars also that stud the firmament revolve their rounds to minister to his felicity. There is not an atom that floats in the breeze, or an insect that flutters in the sunbeams, but was designed by our Creator to conduce to the happiness of mankind. The fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, the reptiles that creep in the dust, the beasts that roam in the forest, the cattle that browse the herbage of the field, and the fishes that people the ocean, were instinctively taught to pay homage to man.

Having favored him with a body both fearfully and wonderfully made; with its various senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling; and having en-



dowed that body with a rational and immortal soul, possessing a correct judgment, a retentive memory, and a free will ; having inspired him with hopes to encourage him, and fears to caution him in his conduct, he made man his deputy-governor in this distant province of his vast empire. He set him over the work of his hands, saying, "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." Blessed Parent of good, how well may it be said, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast crowned him with glory and honor."

(2.) *The blessings bestowed upon men in his providence.*

"Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits." Ps. lxxviii. 19.

The same benevolent disposition which the merciful Creator has manifested to man in creation, is exemplified in his gracious dispensations of providence : "All things work together for his good." The regular succession of day and night, of seed-time and harvest, the sweet interchange of spring and autumn, summer and winter, diurnally, periodically, or annually, contribute to our happiness. "The food we eat he hath made as pleasant to our taste as it is necessary for our health." To renew our strength from day to day, he giveth his

beloved sleep, "Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep."

When man ariseth, he wakes the sun from his slumbers, and bids him open the eyelids of morning, and spring from the chamber of the east to light up the world, so that man may go forth "unto his work and his labor until the evening." Lest his favored creature should faint under the influence of the solar orb, he tells the clouds to cast their cooling shade over him, and fans his feverish cheek with his gentle breeze; and lest the earth should be scorched up with drought, he refreshes it with fertilizing dews, and "maketh it soft with showers. He watereth the ridges thereof abundantly, and settleth the furrows thereof, and blesseth the springing thereof: he crowneth the year with his goodness; and his paths drop fatness." Before man has occasion or time to say, "What shall I eat, or what shall I drink, or wherewithal shall I be clothed?" he gives him the appointed weeks of harvest: meadows spring up, fruit trees bring forth, and corn-fields wave before him: "He fills our barns with plenty, and our presses burst forth with new wine."

And as often as winter spreads its desolating influences over the face of terrestrial creation, even so often he commands the spring to hasten apace to put forth the annual decorations, and perform the yearly repairs of man's favored habitation: "He clothes the trees with

foliage, and plants the fields with flowers. He paints the tulip, scents the brier, and perfumes the rose ; and tells the birds to build their nests and indulge their songs. He reneweth the face of the earth ; he robes creation in beauty, and decks all nature in charms." "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Such is the disposition of the benevolent King of the better country toward the sons of men. And if he is so mindful of the happiness of the unthankful and the disobedient in the desert, what goodness has he laid up for the obedient in Paradise! What an infinite portion have they who have God for the lot of their inheritance! Possessing him, they inherit all things: satisfied for ever with this infinite good: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul! for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

(3.) *His amazing love to all men, as displayed in redemption.*

"Who gave himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. ii. 6.

Now it is not enough to say of the Glorious Monarch of the better land that he is good and merciful to man, for he hath set his heart upon him: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It is the redeeming love of God that amazes men and angels, and fills heaven with wonder and joy:

"Herein is love." This is the finishing-stroke in the glorious portrait of the King of kings. Of all the excellences that cluster around, and shine in the character of the Lord of lords, *redeeming love* is chief. This is the burnishing gem in his divine diadem. The most precious jewel that studs the crown of heaven's eternal King, and the brightest star that shines in the glorious constellation of his attributes, is LOVE! *Creation* supplies a faint outline of his disinterested goodness; *providence* furnishes a rude sketch of his pure benevolence; but *redemption* shows the full-drawn portrait of his universal and perfect love to man. Here it is written in capitals: GOD IS LOVE! You may read it in the stable, in the garden, and on the cross: GOD IS LOVE! Bethlehem, Gethsemane, and Calvary, are witnesses that GOD IS LOVE. Herald it, ye angels, having the everlasting gospel to preach; plume your wings, and, far and wide, haste away in your flight; and hold on your course until all hear it, all believe it, and all feel it—"GOD IS LOVE!" The friendship of David and Jonathan, and the tender attachments of the most endearing kindred affinities of mortals on earth, are cold indifference when contrasted with the exquisite sympathies of this Friend divine in heaven.

It is recorded in history, that "When Damon was sentenced, by Dionysius of Syracuse, to die on a certain day, he begged permission in the interim to retire to his

own country, to set the affairs of his disconsolate family in order. This the tyrant intended peremptorily to refuse, by granting it, as he conceived, on the impossible condition of his procuring some one to remain as hostage for his return under equal forfeiture of life. Pythias heard the conditions, and did not wait for an application on the part of Damon, but instantly offered himself as security for his friend ; and his offer being accepted, Damon was set at liberty. The fatal day arrived : Pythias was brought forth to the place of execution. Dionysius was already there ; he was exalted on a moving throne, which was drawn by six white horses, and sat pensive and attentive to the prisoner. Pythias came : he vaulted lightly on the scaffold ; and after beholding for some time the apparatus of his death, he turned with a placid countenance and addressed the spectators : ‘ My prayers are heard,’ he cried : ‘ the gods are propitious : you know, my friends, that the winds were contrary until yesterday. Damon could not come, he could not conquer impossibilities ; he will be here to-morrow, and the blood which is shed to-day shall have ransomed the life of my friend. O ! could I erase from your bosom every doubt, every mean suspicion of the honor of the man for whom I am about to suffer, I should go to my death even as I would to my bridal. My friend will be found noble ; he is now on his way, hurrying on, accusing himself, the adverse elements, and



the gods ; but I haste to prevent his speed. Executioner, do thine office.' As he pronounced the last words, a buzz began to rise among the remotest of the people. A distant voice was heard : the crowd caught the words, and 'Stop, stop the execution !' was repeated by the whole assembly. A man came at full speed : the throng gave way at his approach. He was mounted on a steed of foam. In an instant he was off his horse, on the scaffold, and clasped Pythias in his arms. 'You are safe !' he cried, 'you are safe, my friend ! My beloved friend, the gods be praised, you are safe !' Pale, cold, and half speechless in the arms of Damon, Pythias replied, in broken accents, 'Fatal haste, cruel impatience, what envious powers have wrought impossibilities in your favor ! But I will not be wholly disappointed : since I cannot die to save, I will not survive you.' Dionysius heard, beheld, and considered all this with astonishment. His heart was touched. He wept ; and, leaving his throne, he ascended the scaffold : 'Live, live, ye incomparable pair !' cried he, 'and form me by your precepts, as ye have invited me by your example, to be worthy of the participation of so sacred a friendship.'"

Now, perhaps this is as far as human friendship can go : "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend." "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die ; yet, peradventure, for a good man, some would even dare to die. But God com-



mendeth his love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, he laid down his life for us." We were ruined by sin, and led captive by the devil at his will; we were condemned, were on the scaffold of execution,—at the point of death; but his eye saw us. It was enough! And what then? His heart pitied us. And what next? His arm brought salvation for us! His mercy flew from heaven to earth, and from earth to the brink of hell, and cried to insulted justice: "*Stop, stop the execution! Deliver him from going down into the pit: I have found a ransom.*" He clasped the sinner in his arms, and said, "You are *safe!* *SAFE!! SAFE!!!*" Herein is friendship divine, dying friendship. He wrapped his *foes* in his bosom, and plucked his *enemies* from the fire, and himself suffered instead of them in the midst of the flame! Be astonished, O heaven! at this:

"He seized our dreadful right, the load sustained,  
And heaved the mountain from a guilty world!"

And if he hath done and suffered all this for his enemies on earth, what may his friends expect in heaven?

Nothing, in the universe of God, has called forth such sympathy for its welfare as the soul of man. The King of glory has done more for man than he has done for angels; more for you than he has done for Michael; and more for us than he has done for Gabriel: more for earth than ever he did for heaven! He hath loved an-

gels, and provided them with happiness, vast as their wishes, and lasting as their being ; yet he never died for them. " But he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities," that, by the sufferings of death, he might bless a dying world with life, and bring many sons to glory. No wonder that saints are represented as singing, " Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, unto him be glory and dominion for ever."

(4.) *The benefits vouchsafed to mankind by his boundless grace.*

" He delighteth in mercy." Micah vii. 18.

The King of Zion is not only good to the obedient and thankful, but he is merciful to the evil and unthankful sons of men. This will be seen in his unwillingness to punish the guilty until they have sinned their day of grace away. " He is long-suffering," and " slow to anger ;" " judgment is his strange work—his last work ;" for " he hates putting away : " " not willing that any should perish." His mercy is manifested in his promptitude in pardoning the guilty when they return to his footstool, in repentance and faith, to ask his forgiveness. It is one of his distinguished attributes, that " he pardoneth iniquity." He has graciously forgiven some of the vilest sinners that ever lived on earth ; and even now he is " a God ready to pardon." He rejects none who seek his grace ; he sends none empty away : " For

whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." His mercy is further exemplified in the value of the favors which he freely bestows on the subjects of his grace. He gives peace of conscience, joy unspeakable, and hope that blooms with immortality. And he shows this mercy with cheerfulness ; he bestows these favors freely. It is "his good *pleasure* to give us the kingdom." His heart *rejoiceth* over the penitent believer to do him good. "HE DELIGHTETH IN MERCY."

And although there are no guilty sinners to pardon in his dominions of glory, for "the people are all righteous," yet the mercy of God will be a source of transport and joy to the redeemed in heaven, world without end. Remembering that grace alone delivered them from going down into the pit, and brought them to glory, what an ardor there will be in the aspirations of the millions ransomed, at the thought! what gratefulness of expression! what tenderness and depth of emotion! what exquisitely refined sensibility of obligation! what thrilling raptures there will be in their songs! what pathos in their loud hosannahs! what inspiration in their everlasting hallelujahs, while they feel that they are sinners saved by grace, and brands plucked from eternal fire! They will fill heaven with their transports, and sing of redemption and grace until the crystal sea trembles with vibration, and

Paradise shouts for joy. "O, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his MERCY endureth for ever."

11. *His relationship to the human family.*

"It is your *Father's* good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke xii. 32.

The relation in which the King of glory stands to his human subjects, may, in some measure, assist in the solution of the great mystery of his unspeakable love to the children of men. We have seen that he is our Creator, our Preserver, our Redeemer, and our Saviour; and now we ask you to contemplate his paternal relationship: "For like as a *father* pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." And a father can feel bowels of tenderness and melting compassion for his children, such as few can feel.

In the neighborhood of Manchester was a family, consisting of a father, two sons, and a daughter. One of the sons was very much given to licentiousness, and frequently left his father's house to waste his substance in riotous living. At length his brother and sister sought the influence of one of the friends of the family, to induce the father to banish him for ever from the paternal roof. The sister introduced the subject, by saying, "She hoped her father had, by this time, seen enough of her brother ——'s undutiful conduct to convince him that the sooner he was banished from his

house, the better." The brother, also, expressed his hope that the family would never again be disgraced by his presence. And then the friend expressed his surprise that the father had borne with him so long as he had, and could not see how he could ever open his door for him again.

The father's heart was true to the relation in which it stood to his undutiful son. His eyes moistened with a father's tears; and, looking at the daughter, he said, "You are *only his sister*; therefore, you could shut him out of doors." Then, turning to the son, he said, "You are *only his brother*; and could, therefore, easily abandon him to his vicious habits." And then, addressing his visitor, he said, "You are *only his friend*; and could, therefore, subject him to perpetual banishment, without a painful emotion. But I am his *father*; and whatever his friend, or brother, or sister might do, when he repents and returns, his father will forgive and receive him again." Poor returning prodigal son of heaven, remember it is the eye of a Father, thy Heavenly Father, that is upon thee. Thy Father's hand beckons thee to heaven; thy Father's heart will make thee room; thy Father's arms will take thee in.

The love of our Heavenly Father exceeds the love of the tenderest mother: "A woman may forget her sucking child, and fail to have compassion on the son of her womb;" but the affection of our Heavenly Father never



fails ; when all else fails, he is our Father still. When Charles Beardslee had read his pious mother's letter, of surpassing eloquence, pressing it to his bosom, he exclaimed, with a flood of tears, "O ! she is a mother yet." He was a native of New-Haven, in America ; and, after a brief career of prodigality, was found, by a respected colleague of the writer's, in the workhouse at Whitehaven, in England. Our friend, having learned his history, wrote home to his broken-hearted mother, to inform her of the dying circumstances of her prodigal son ; to whom she immediately addressed a letter, such as only a mother, only a widowed mother, only a pious widowed mother, could either indite or write :

" 'My own one,' says she, 'a mother's full heart is yearning over you, and bleeding for you. Have you believed, while you were wandering over the deep blue sea, exposed to danger, sickness, and death, and unfit to die, that your mother could eat her food, and be at ease and rest on her lonely pillow ? O no, Charles ! my food has frequently been wet with my tears, when my poor wanderer has stood before my mind's eye. Many have been my sleepless nights. At midnight I have risen to pray for you ; and many a long hour have I walked the floor, my heart being far away over the ocean with my fatherless boy. Do you intend, my boy, to join the blessed throng in heaven, in singing the praises of the Lamb that was slain ? Repent, then, ere



it be too late. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Give yourself up to God. Cast yourself in the dust at the Redeemer's feet: he died to save you. Do not give yourself up to die because you are in poverty and want. Receive the assurance of a mother's kind love, and sincere forgiveness for all the past, and return unto us like the poor prodigal.' Now, when Charles had read these and many other similar sentiments which the letter contained, big tears gushed from his dark eyes, and rolled down his wan cheeks, while he cried out, 'God be merciful to me a sinner! O, she is *a mother yet!*'"

And thou, poor prodigal, returning to thy Heavenly Father's house, read his letter to thee; this exceeds that of the mother! What lines of love are here: "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, and the love of thine espousals: 'I am married unto thee!' Return unto me, and I will return unto thee: I will heal thy backslidings; I will love thee freely. Prodigal as thou hast been, yet, only repent, I will be thy Father still." As it is written, "I will be to them a Father, and they shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." The place of future happiness is our Father's house; the better country is our Fatherland; the kingdom of heaven is our "Father's kingdom." "I go," said our elder brother and redeeming kinsman, "to my Father and your Father." O! when shall we be permitted to follow him to our home in the skies, to

our family residence, and to our Father which is in heaven?

“When shall we reach that happy place,  
And be for ever blest?  
When shall we see our Father’s face,  
And in his bosom rest?”

12. *His efforts to promote emigration to his kingdom.*

“God was manifested in the flesh.” 1 Tim. iii. 16.

The desire for a universal tide of emigration from earth to his blissful dominions, which is felt in the benevolent heart of the gracious Sovereign of the better land, is sufficiently evinced by his manifestation in the flesh, for us men and for our salvation; and in his extensive preparations, his general invitations, and in his exceeding precious promises. Observe,

(1.) *His extensive preparations.*

“Inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” Matt. xxv. 34.

It sometimes happens that the native kings and petty chiefs, or local rulers, of colonial settlements are ill-disposed toward settlers from other countries; but not so the Divine Ruler of this better country. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit conspire to bring mankind to heaven. Every needful preparation is made for human safety, happiness, and glory in the regions of life and immortality. Concerning the travellers to Mount Zion, it is said of the Father, “He hath prepared for them a city.” Jesus Christ said to his disciples,

before he ascended on high, "I go to prepare a place for you." And the work of the Holy Ghost is, to prepare the people of God for the enjoyment of the rest that remains for them—to "make them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

(2.) *His general invitations.*

"And whosoever will, let him come." Rev. xxii. 17.

The King of glory has invited all men to his glorious dominions. He has held intercourse with mankind for nearly six thousand years. He sent many messages of mercy to our fathers; and, after a long correspondence of nearly four thousand years, through the medium of the prophets and seers, "God was manifested in the flesh." It were much to send us so many messages of mercy and invitations from heaven by the mouth of his servants, but more to come over and invite us himself. Neither was it a transient visit that he paid to this vale of tears, for he set up his tabernacle here, and dwelt among men. And having spent about thirty-three years in making the necessary arrangements for a general and universal tide of emigration to his dominions of glory, he returned to the skies.

In the mean time he commissioned his ambassadors to creep into every cellar; to climb into every garret; to travel over mountains; to sail over seas; to enter every village, every town, and every city; to lift up

their voice on every continent and in every country ; and to assure every family and tell every man in the world, that the kingdom of heaven was open to all believers. He instructed them to bid all men welcome to the better land, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, Whosoever will, may come ; and he that cometh I will in no wise cast out." He commanded them to go quickly into the highways and hedges, and streets and lanes, to spread the news, saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." They were to hear no excuse, to take no denial, but to compel men to come, that his house might be full. Now, as the work of grace on earth is merely preparatory to man's glorification in heaven, it will follow that every invitation to "the throne of grace" is, in reality, an invitation to the inheritance of eternal glory. For grace and glory being joined together, let not man put them asunder. Grace is glory in the bud ; and glory is grace in the flower. And, as surely as we are saved by grace, the Lord will give us glory—"a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

(3.) *His exceeding great and precious promises.*

"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev. xxi. 6.

What is true of the invitations of Zion's King, is equally true of his promises. Every promise of forgiveness of sins, and of grace to help in time of need, is, in

effect, a pledge of future happiness. For where else but in heaven could a people, forgiven their iniquity, find their destiny in the world to come? We could arrive at the conclusion, by a process of simple reasoning, that the Lord, who gives grace, will also give glory; but we have his sure word of promise—the plain, unequivocal word of Jehovah, upon which he hath caused his people to hope—“He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:” “To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God:” “His doctrine drops like the rain,” teeming with the promises of grace here, and with pledges of glory hereafter: “His speech distils as the dew;” for thus saith the Lord to his people: “I will give unto you ETERNAL LIFE.” His promises are exceeding great and precious, and in Jesus Christ are Yea, and in him Amen. Moreover, he hath *sworn* by himself to the heirs of the promised land, saying: “In blessing I will bless you,” “and give you an expected end:” “a good land, and a large, a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Such, then, are a few of the distinguishing characteristics of the gracious King of glory. What illustrious titles! what august majesty! what gracious attributes! what glorious perfections are here! What distinguishing goodness to mankind! What endearing

relationship to the human family does the gracious Governor of the better land sustain! What preparations for your reception! what invitations to heaven! and what promises of life everlasting are here! Will you return to the house of your Father, which is in heaven? Will you seek restoration to his happy family? Poor prodigal son of heaven, penniless peer of the glory realm, and poverty-stricken prince of the Paradise of God, clothed in rags as thou art, thy Father desires thy return! "He calls thee now, invites thee home!" He bids thee welcome. "Come, and welcome, reader, thou!" Say, then, at once, I will return to my native country, "I will arise and go to my Father." Resolve to come out of the world, and unite with the Church. Abandon the service of Satan, and trust in the merits of Christ. By holy obedience on earth, seek for glory, honor, and happiness in heaven; and, yet a little while, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." So be it.



## CHAPTER V.

## THE GENEROUS NATIVES.

“Are they not all ministering spirits?”—HEB. i. 14.

It will be seen and understood that when we speak of the aborigines of the better country, we mean the angels of God. “With these we shall, if we are wise, become familiarly acquainted, and intimately united, and shall live in the midst of them through ages which cannot end.” Having already furnished the best information in our possession concerning the gracious Sovereign, we shall next call your attention to the “generous natives” of the holy land. Observe we,

1. *Their general designation.*

“The angels of God.” Heb. i. 6.

The original inhabitants of the kingdom of heaven are called “angels.” The word “angel” signifies a messenger, or bringer of tidings ; and it is the common name given to those intellectual and immaterial beings who have their perpetual residence in the Paradise of God. In the Scriptures we read of angel and archangel, cheru-

bim and seraphim, of thrones and dominions, and principalities and powers. We read, also, of Michael and Gabriel, of living ones, of morning stars, and of the sons of God ; and as all these names are given to angels by God himself, to indicate their true character and office, it will be admitted that they are creatures possessed of preëminent dignity, importance, and distinction in the kingdom of eternal glory. These are the officers of the celestial state, the peers of the realm of glory, and the princes of the Paradise of God. These are next, in dignity and rank, to the gracious Sovereign of the better country : they belong to his glorious court ; they form his ministerial cabinet ; and attend in his chamber of counsel, as ambassadors and deputies, to receive his commands and to do his pleasure, "hearkening to the voice of his word."

2. *Their immaterial nature.*

"Who maketh his angels spirits." Heb. i. 7.

That angels are spiritual creatures of God, is a revealed certainty : "Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." Several of the titles given to angels are expressive of their nature : "The word 'spirit' denotes their immateriality ; 'cherubim'—which signifies knowing ones—their intellectuality ; and 'living ones,' their immortality." Now, whether angelic spirits dwell in bodies, in some way resembling those which the saints, after the resurrection, shall pos-

sess, is a problem which only the knowledge of a future state can solve. One thing, however, is certain : they either have their happy existence in some highly refined etherealized body, that can be transported at pleasure, with the celerity of electricity, to the most distant regions of Jehovah's empire ; or else, on their being dispatched to this world, on errands of mercy to men, they assume a tangible form and visible appearance. For we read of them being seen and felt, and of their bodily aspect resembling the most lovely and beautiful, and surpassing the most glorious of the children of men ; and of their having been entertained as men unawares.

### 3. *Their probationary state.*

"Their first estate." Jude 6.

It is considered to be in the highest degree probable that the first period of angelic existence was probationary, and that such probation was completed before the creation of mankind : those who had kept their first estate, and proved their allegiance to the King of glory, being confirmed in happiness ; and those who left their own habitations being cast out of heaven for their pride and rebellion against the Most High. It is certain that Satan was already a fallen angel when Adam and Eve dwelt in perfect innocence in Eden, because "all sin is of the devil," who is, consequently, the author of the ruin of our first parents and all their

posterity. From the Scriptures it appears that these illustrious beings were in existence to celebrate the event of this world's creation with songs of praise and shouts of joy ; and the probability is, that their destiny was fixed "or ever the mountains were brought forth, or the hills were formed, or the earth was created," or the world was. What interesting society is here ! What illustrious companions ! What delightful associates are these aborigines of the better land ! All tried, proved obedient, and found perfect before God.

4. *Their countless numbers.*

"An innumerable company of angels." Heb. xii. 22.

When the august Ruler of the universe published the code of laws by which this distant province in his vast empire should be governed, he appeared in Divine majesty upon Mount Sinai, where he was attended with "thousands of angels." When Daniel speaks of the angelic attendants of the Ancient of Days, he says, "thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." The number of these celestial beings who gave attendance in the hill country of Judea, when the first-born of glory was brought forth in Bethlehem's stable, is called "a multitude of the heavenly host." When the King of Zion was manifested in the flesh, and his enemies were come out against him "with lanterns, and torches, and swords, and staves," he signified to Peter, "that if he

should pray to his Father he would presently send him more than twelve legions of angels." St. John speaks of many angels round about the throne ; and St. Paul of "an innumerable company." From whence it is evident that the native population of heaven is immense, and beyond calculation.

5. *Their amazing strength.*

"Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength." Ps. ciii. 20.

These exalted creatures of God are represented in the book of the Revelation of St. John as holding the four winds of heaven, and controlling the events of this world for a succession of ages with a power next to omnipotent. When commissioned by God to inflict the chastisements of his providence, an angel, in three days, destroyed three-score and ten thousand people out of the tribes of Judah and Israel. In one night an angel destroyed one hundred and eighty-five thousand men of the army of Sennacherib. The expressions made use of by the sacred writers to describe the power of angels, such as "a strong angel," a "mighty angel," and angels that "excel in strength," convey to our minds the idea that they are possessed of might approaching the nearest to the power of the Almighty.

6. *Their surprising activity.*

"Above him stood the seraphim : each one had six wings." Isa. vi. 2.



The agility with which these celestial creatures transport themselves is truly astonishing. Some of their orders are represented as having six wings ; which symbolical language is used, no doubt, to denote the extraordinary power of transition which angels possess. It is not improbable that they have power to pass through distances, to us immeasurable, as quickly as we can think ; and that they travel with a rapidity of motion surpassing lightning's speed. It is said that the electric fluid runs along the telegraphic wires at the astonishing rate of two hundred and eighty-eight thousand miles in a second of time ; but, supposing the heaven of heavens to be beyond the starry firmament, how much more swiftly did Gabriel come from the presence of God to the prophet Daniel ! It would require three hundred and twenty-nine seconds to send an electric telegraphic message to the sun, and nearly three thousand years to send one to the fixed stars ; but Daniel's prayer went up to heaven, and Gabriel came with the answer of God while he was still on his knees, and was yet speaking. "This is a rapidity exceeding all the comprehension of the most active imagination ; surpassing beyond any comparison the amazing swiftness of light. And yet, swift as they are, they are ever active, and never weary in their Creator's service." "They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty."



7. *Their extensive knowledge.*

"According to the wisdom of an angel." 2 Sam. xiv. 20.

These original inhabitants of the heavenly world are represented as being full of eyes within, which conveys the impression to our minds that they are all sense, all intellect, all consciousness, "turning their attention every way, and beholding at once all things within the reach of their understanding." According to eminent theologians, the name "cherubim," given to one of the angelic orders, signifies "knowing ones," being the plural of cherub, which means "fulness of knowledge." It is, perhaps, not too much to say, that their knowledge of God and his works is such as to render them incapable of error. Formed in the beginning with the most perfect intellectual capabilities; employed, as they have been, for thousands of years in contemplating the wonderful works of God; and favored, as they must have been, with direct communications from him, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;" how astonishing must be the extent of their knowledge! how high their intellectual attainments! how sublime and glorious their mental elevation! No wonder that the Scriptures give to us the intimation that nothing that is known of God is hidden from angels: "Of that day knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, but my Father only."

8. *Their exalted stations.*

"Angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him." 1 Pet. iii. 22.

We think the inspired writers intended to convey the idea that angels are exalted to the dignity of subordinate rulers under the government of God. We can scarcely conceive of the number of agents employed by the Supreme Ruler to carry out his purposes, and accomplish the good pleasure of his will. They are styled "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers;" probably to denote that they hold offices of government under him, by whom "kings reign, and princes decree justice." In the British dominions, for example, there is one sovereign whose sceptre sways over the United Kingdom and all its dependencies. Yet there are Lord Provosts, Lord Lieutenants, and other deputy governors, in the provinces and colonial settlements; besides all the peers, or lords in council, and commoners in parliament, mayoralties, corporations, and magistracies, to assist in the government of the empire. And in some way analogous to this, it appears that angels sit on thrones, hold dominion, and exercise authority under the supreme Governor of the better land.

9. *Their exceeding glory.*

"And his face was as it were the sun." Rev. x. 1.

The ancient people of the better country are described as beings of transcendent loveliness and beauty.

Those who descended to announce the nativity of Heaven's first-born, were radiant with a glory that amazed and overwhelmed the shepherds of Bethlehem. The celestial beings who gave attendance at the tomb of Jesus Christ, on the resurrection morn, were clad in raiment as white as snow, and their countenance beamed with a glory as brilliant as lightning. St. John speaks of an angel "clothed with a cloud ; and a rainbow was upon his head ; and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire." And probably angels are called "morning stars," to denote their unrivalled beauty and exceeding glory.

10. *Their immortal existence.*

"Neither can they die any more, for they are equal unto the angels." Luke xx. 36.

Life is a distinguishing characteristic of angelic being : they are called "living ones ;" a name expressive of the immortality of their nature. The angel that appeared to the pious females who went early to our Lord's sepulchre, had been in existence for at least about four thousand years ; but still, his eye was not dim ; the hand of time had wrought no furrows in his cheeks ; there was no sign of old age about him ; there was no indication of decay in his aspect ; he had all the appearance of "a young man ;" beauty was fresh on his lovely cheek ; his countenance glowed with youth, and bloomed with immortality.

11. *Their immaculate purity.*

"And all the holy angels with him." Matt. xxv. 31.

The native population of the better land are a race of beings who have never done an improper action, never spoken an improper word, and never indulged an improper thought. Originally made free from sin, they never deviated from the path of virtue, but kept their first estate. Their cheeks have never reddened with a blush, because no sense of guilt ever oppressed their holy hearts. No emotion of shame ever disturbed their heavenly peace, because no spot of pollution ever defiled their garments. No bitter relentings have lingered on their lips, because no impure purpose, or act of disobedience, ever disgraced their virtuous lives. From the beginning, they have been subject to their gracious Sovereign, meekly and humbly, affectionately and obediently, cheerfully and constantly, doing his pleasure, and hearkening to the voice of his word. No wonder that they are designated, "holy angels:"

"Holy angels, bright and fair."

God is in all their thoughts. "Holiness unto the Lord" is in all their works. They live, and move, and breathe in regions of holiness.

12. *Their relationship to men.*

"And all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job xxxviii. 7.

The aboriginal people of Paradise, and the settlers there, have one common Father; hence, they are related to each other by the tenderest ties of kindred affinity, being children of the same parent, and members of the same family. They are our elder brethren, it is true, but their Father is our Father, and our God is their God. These *elder* sons of God have never left their Father's house—have never, at any time, transgressed his commandment; whereas, prodigal man, the *younger* son, has wandered from God, and lost all title to the patrimonial estate; but, recovered from his distant wanderings, penitent, pardoned, purified man shall return to these kinsmen and friends, shall dwell with them in the same family residence, and share with them in the enjoyment of the family heritage, in our Heavenly Father's house. How deeply interesting are these simple views of the kingdom of heaven. The king of these blissful dominions of glory is our Father, "Our Father which is in heaven." The angels, dignified and exalted in title and rank, in employment and station, in attribute and perfection, and exalted in honor and glory, as they may be, are our friends, our relations, our brethren; and heaven, with all its infinity, immensity, and eternity of glory, is our home. Without undervaluing the ancestral honors of those who ride on the high-places of the earth, we may observe, that the humblest follower of the lowly Jesus



is the rightful heir to higher honors: he is born of the Spirit to better immunities, and prepared by grace for higher associations: he is allied to angels, is a peer of the realms of glory, and next of kin to the highest order of princes in the Paradise of God.

13. *Their gladness at man's creation.*

"The morning stars sang together." Job xxxviii. 7.

The "morning stars," you will remember, is one of the illustrious distinctions of the generous natives of the better land. They are represented as giving expression to the generous feelings of their benevolent nature at the creation of kindred spirits, to share with them in the approving smile of their bountiful Creator, and to engage in the delightful service of their glorious King. Not that we are to understand that their joy, as expressed at the creation, was exclusively confined to the human species; but as man was the chief of the wondrous works of creation, it is just to infer that he was the chief object of their admiration among the creatures that sprang into being at the almighty fiat of the gracious Sovereign of the universe.

How much interest they felt when "God said, Let there be light, and there was light;" when he fixed the bounds of the deep blue seas; when the earth, at the voice of his word, was mantled o'er with every description of beautiful flowers, and every variety of delicious fruit; when the pastures were filled with flocks, and



the valleys were covered over with corn, we cannot tell; but we are certain that when they saw a spiritual and intellectual being resembling themselves emerge into existence, a creature resplendent with his Maker's image, crowned with glory and honor, and ordained lord of terrestrial creation, they struck their harps to the natal hymn of their younger brother, and sang together at the beginning of his being. And when we take into our calculations that inferior creation was designed for man's use, that the heavens were stretched forth as a curtain, and spread abroad as a tent in which man might dwell with his Maker, and that the earth was formed and furnished to subserve his good, then we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that it was on the occasion of man's creation that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God did shout for joy."

14. *Their interest in human redemption.*

"Which things the angels desire to look into." 1 Peter i. 12.

When their glorious King had revealed to them the time of his advent to this world, one of their chief princes flew swiftly to bring the news of his coming to the sons of men. The same celestial personage announced the miraculous conception of Christ to his virgin mother, saying, "Thou shalt conceive and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."

When the first-born of glory was brought forth in the stable, the angel of the Lord proclaimed his nativity to the shepherds, saying, "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

After the temptation of the Redeemer of mankind, "angels came and ministered unto him ;" and during his agony, "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him." Angels were early at the tomb of Jesus, to roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and to dispel the fears of the pious females who had gone to anoint him. When Christ ascended on high and led captivity captive, standing in the midst of his weeping disciples, two of them said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

St. Peter, speaking of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, represents these celestial beings as manifesting the most lively interest in the glorious scheme of human redemption: "Which things the angels desire to look into!" And such is the intense concern which they feel for the triumph of Christ in the redemption and salvation of mankind, that it is not improbable that the highest and brightest of these angelic intelligences would rejoice to exert their capabilities in preach-

ing the glorious gospel of the blessed God to the perishing children of men : that Michael would rejoice to be a missionary to the heathen ; and that Gabriel would count it an honor to teach Christ to the infant class of the humblest Sabbath-school.

15. *Their joy at man's conversion.*

“ Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” Luke xv. 7.

Now the time of a sinner's repentance may properly be considered as the time when, in a scriptural sense, he solemnly purposes in his heart to come out of spiritual Egypt, leaving its onions and cucumbers and its flesh-pots behind, and when he deliberately starts on the journey through the wilderness to Canaan ; and when these benevolent creatures hear the expression of his resolution, “ I will arise, and go to my Father,” they celebrate his conversion with mirth and feasting ; when they see him on his way to his Father's feet, with a contrite spirit and a broken heart, his penitent tears move all the harps of heaven ; and when the Father runs to meet his long-lost one, falls on his neck, kisses away the flowing tears of contrition from his wan cheek, and seals a pardon on his heart, then angel choirs in heaven resound, “ The dead's alive—the lost is found.”

So far are these generous native people of the better country from feelings of envy or disaffection, when

streaming tides of human beings are pouring into the happy land, that they rejoice when men sell up in Babylon, and abandon their stuff in Egypt. It seems to increase their happiness, when they receive new accessions to the numberless population of the glory regions; and the time when the emigrant starts for the better land, is to them an occasion of celestial jubilee: "For I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

16. *Their services to man on his way to heaven.*

"He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Psalm xci. 11.

Angels are employed as the protectors and guardians of the wayworn traveller to Zion, as it is written: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." St. Paul informs us that they are frequently engaged in ministering to the wants of the children of God: "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Several examples of the way in which they minister blessings to the heirs of salvation are recorded in holy writ for our instruction and encouragement.

They hastened Lot out of Sodom, and delivered him from the destruction of Gomorrah. They brought a message of mercy to Abraham, while passing through the keenest trial that ever fell to a mere mortal's lot,

and announced to him the blessings to which he had become heir by faith. They were the agents employed in rescuing the life of Isaac from the sacrificial knife of the patriarchal and paternal priest. They comforted Jacob, on his return from the service of Laban to his own country, when he feared to meet Esau his brother by the way. They fed Elijah with a cake, and supplied him with a cruse of water, in the desert, and he went in the strength of that meat forty days. They appeared unto Gideon while he was thrashing wheat in the barn, and ministered peace to his troubled mind, saying, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Of Israel it is said, "The angel of His presence saved them, in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and bare them and carried them, all the days of old." They gave instructions to Joseph, the carpenter, on a subject of the greatest importance; relieved his anxiety about matters that involved his temporal happiness, and banished every doubt from his upright heart for ever. They rescued Peter from prison; they brought tidings of comfort to Paul; and as for John, they were almost his constant companions in his exile on the Isle of Patmos, as a ministering host of invisible friends. As it is written, "He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."



17. *Their sympathy with man in his final departure.*

"The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Luke xvi. 22.

From this passage of holy writ, it would seem that these generous natives are not only the companions and guardians of the Christian traveller to the promised land, but, when he comes to his journey's end, they are his willing servants still. It is probable that every "chamber where a good man meets his fate" is crowded with these celestial friends; that "angels are ever there—there on a post of honor and of joy." They are with the emigrant to glory during six troubles, and they do not leave him in the seventh, nor in the seventeenth, or seventieth!

How they minister to the wants of the departing saint, we are not permitted, at present, to know, or say; but that angels are the attendants of Christians during life's last hours, we are well assured from the testimonies of those whom we have followed to the confines of earth and the verge of heaven, as well as from the word of God. "There is one come now," said a departing Christian, at Marston, near York, in the year 1852; alluding, it was supposed, to a guardian angel who was commissioned to escort his disembodied spirit to the better land. And in a few moments he exclaimed, in holy ecstacy, "They are all here now! I am going now!" and he passed through death triumphant home.



Hundreds, in a dying-hour, have given utterance to expressions which could leave no doubt that they believed themselves to be surrounded by celestial attendants:

“Hark! they whisper: angels say,  
Sister spirit, come away!”

Our Lord Jesus Christ, for the encouragement and comfort of all his followers, tells of one who was carried by the angels into “Abraham’s bosom.” And be it remembered that the angels of God are not only present to soothe the dying-pillow of those who gather up their feet into a bed of down, and finish their earthly course in the bosom of affectionate friendships, and filial, paternal, or maternal attentions, but the outcasts of men are not forsaken by angels. Here is a poverty-stricken saint, the victim of disease, covered with rags, a pauper, perishing in the street, among the rich man’s dogs that “licked his sores;” but his elder brethren, from his Father’s house, did not blush to own him. They were not ashamed to spread their wings over him, and minister to his dying wants, the while he “languished into life:” for “it came to pass that the *beggar* died, and he was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom.”

18. *Their joy at man’s glorification.*

“For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” Rev. xix. 7.

It is not improbable that these generous natives of the better country will render important service to the saints on the blessed morning of the resurrection ; for it is written, "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." When the disciples of Jesus said unto him, "Declare unto us the parable of the tares," he said unto them, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man ; the field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels."

At the last judgment, they will be engaged in the separation of the precious from the vile, gathering the wheat into the garner of heaven, and casting the chaff into the lake of unquenchable fire. And having reaped the abundant harvest, and filled the garner of heaven with immortal souls, and secured for the Redeemer his revenue of glory, they will join in the general shout of "*harvest home*," and unite in the everlasting song of harvest feast, "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ."

Having witnessed the extent, the glory, and the perpetuity of the kingdom of Christ, they are represented as rejoicing at the completion of the grand scheme of human redemption in man's enthronement, coronation,

and eternal glorification, saying, "It is done! The mystery is finished! The great battle of redemption is fought, and the glorious victory of saving grace is won! Thou hast conquered, O Galilean! and here is the reward of thy humiliation, the meed of thy suffering, and the labor of thy dying love: harlots, and publicans, and thieves, redeemed to God by thy stoop to Bethlehem, thy sorrow in Gethsemane, and thy pangs on Calvary! Thou hast brought many sons to glory!" "And, after this, I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, 'Alleluia!' and again they said, 'Alleluia!'" Amen! alleluia! alleluia! "For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Such are the generous natives of the better land. What lovely creatures are those! What interesting companions are here! How great the change to the happy settlers, who have gone from the filthy conversations, abominable practices, and cruel persecutions of the wicked on earth, to the society of those holy aborigines of heaven! Are you preparing to enjoy the delightful companionship of those wise, benevolent, and ancient people of the celestial Canaan? They are your kindred spirits, "if ye receive not the grace of God in vain." They are your elder brethren, and will hail your arrival in heaven, and sing your welcome to your Father's house. They have rejoiced over your crea-

tion and redemption! It would increase their happiness to witness your conversion, and to render you constant service on your way to glory. They would gladly escort you from the desert to Paradise at last; and, if you refuse not, their joy over you will be complete in your final glorification. Perhaps you have sold up in Babylon long ago, and, weary of banishment and exile, are sighing to return from the captivity of earth to your native heaven. Is it so? Then be of good cheer, and "lift up your head, for your redemption draweth near." Be faithful unto death, and you shall secure a permanent settlement among the generous natives of the better country. May we meet in heaven, for Christ's sake. Amen.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE HAPPY SETTLERS.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”—REV. vii. 7.

It is our happiness to know, from the very highest authority, that, whatever may be the extent of our privations and sufferings, and of our dangers and toils, in this wilderness, there is rest for us in Canaan. Many who were once our companions “in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,” are now basking in heaven’s bright sunbeams, and reposing securely in its holy calm. Having already given you a brief account of the gracious Sovereign, and the generous natives, we shall now adduce a few plain remarks on the “*happy settlers* in the better country.” Observe we,

1. *Their wondrous history.*

“These are they which came out of great tribulation.”  
REV. vii. 14.

It will be seen, by reference to the Scriptures, that the happy settlers in the better land have been ruined

by sin, redeemed by Christ, and regenerated by the Holy Ghost. They had their origin in Adam, who was created in the image of God, about six thousand years ago. This first man was made in a state of physical, mental, and moral perfection. He was perfectly holy and happy in his primeval state, and was pronounced by his Maker to be very good. "But man, being in honor, continued not:" he transgressed the law of his Maker, and was driven from Paradise on account of his disobedience; and, thus ruined by sin, he brought himself and posterity under sentence of death. But God, "who is rich in mercy," and "not willing that any should perish," came down from heaven to earth "to seek and save that which was lost." The first-born Son of heaven suffered death in the sinner's stead; and, thus redeemed by the blood of Christ, these guilty and ruined sons of men were brought back to their forfeited heaven.

Be it remembered, however, that before they were removed from the wilderness to Canaan, they were regenerated by the Holy Ghost—created anew in Christ Jesus. Hence they are a race of people, every one of whom has been under sentence of death. They are a community of released prisoners; a company of acquitted criminals; a congregation of pardoned penitents; a multitude of sinners saved by grace. Some of them have gone to heaven through much distress and pain,



and many a conflict here ; through castles and dungeons, and tempests and storms ; but neither floods, nor flames, nor earth, nor hell, could stop them in their passage to the skies ; for “ in all these things they were more than conquerors, through him who loved them.”

2. *Their incalculable number.*

“ I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude which no man could number.” Rev. vii. 9.

The tide of emigration to this better land set in about six thousand years ago ; and all the good and holy of every age and of every nation who have gone hence have settled there. It is ascertained from the registration of births and deaths, that half the human family, at least, die in a state of childhood ; and it is our happiness to know, on the highest authority, that none of these miss their way to the regions of life and immortality. The great Teacher sent from God has for ever disposed of the shocking doctrine of infant reprobation, by assuring us that none who die in the age of non-accountability are suffered to perish, and that “ of such is the kingdom of heaven.” It is true that our children are conceived in sin—are depraved in their nature ; but it is equally true that “ there is a fountain open for sin and for uncleanness.” They are saved by virtue of the atonement of Jesus, and accepted to heaven through the Beloved.

Besides all these, there is a great multitude of virtu-

ous heathens who, having served God in their generation, according to the best light which they possessed, have been led by the Spirit of truth to the heavenly Jerusalem: "For in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." And in addition to all these, there are countless numbers who, having been favored with the oracles of God, and the ordinances of his gospel, have believed in Christ unto life everlasting. Hence St. John, who wrote eighteen hundred years ago, says, "I beheld, and, lo! a great number which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands."

Millions since then have gone up to possess the good land. Millions are now on their way to heaven; and the number increases every day, and will continue to increase until every man shall be found travelling to Zion, with his face thitherward: "For as truly as I live, saith the Lord, the whole earth shall be filled with my glory." The time will come when the broad road may have this inscription written over its wide gate: "*The deserted way.*" "For all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest." "And in those future times, what immense multitudes shall enter into heaven! So that it may yet be seen that the number of those who will be lost from the whole human family, com-

pared with those who will be saved, will be no greater in proportion than the number of criminals in a well-organized community, who are imprisoned, are, compared with the number of obedient, virtuous, and peaceful citizens."

3. *Their intellectual attainments.*

"Then shall I know even as also I am known."

1 Cor. xiii. 12.

The knowledge of the happy settlers in the better land is perfect. Here we know only in part, but there that which is perfect is come, and that which was in part is done away. To say the very least, their knowledge is so far perfect as to render them incapable of error ; for if they do not understand every thing, they do not misunderstand any thing ; and thus, perfect in kind, their knowledge, in every stage of advancement, will be more and more perfect in degree for ever. It is not too much to say that the intellectual attainments of a Locke, exploring the regions of human mind, and sounding the fountains of thought ; that the proficiency of a Newton, soaring away on the wings of science to the sidereal heavens ; and that the knowledge of others, who have astonished the world with their philosophic discoveries, will be surpassed by the least of all saints in heaven, as far as the sublimest acquirements of the most comprehensive minds on earth have exceeded the understanding of an infant of days.

And as to the doctrine of recognition in heaven, the probability is that men are familiar with angels and archangels, are as intimate with Michael and Gabriel as David with Jonathan, and know cherubs and seraphs as well as Pythias his Damon ; and if the rich man in the bottomless pit could see through the blackness and darkness of perdition, and when thus "*afar off*" could distinctly recognize "Lazarus in Abraham's bosom," and it was so, then it is certain that parents and children, husbands and wives, and brethren and sisters of the family ; that ministers, and members, and Christians, and their companions in the Church, will at once and for ever recognize each other ; and that the endearing and affectionate friendships which commenced on earth will be consummated in heaven, and continued for ever.

4. *Their surprising longevity.*

"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." John ii. 26.

The love of life is natural to all living ; and the fear of death is the common lot of mortals. Such is the mortality of the present state, that, according to the most accurate calculations, about 30,000,000 of human beings die every year, or 80,357 every day, 3,348 every hour, and about 55 every minute. It is supposed that 150,000,000,000 of human beings have existed on earth since the creation—all of whom, with two or three

exceptions, have been removed by death to their final destiny. Allowing for each of these a grave eighteen inches wide, and six feet long, it would require 30,991,735 acres of land, or, in other words, a cemetery one hundred miles wide, and five hundred miles long, to give unto each of them a possession of burying-place, being about equal in dimensions to the English Isle. Placed side by side, their narrow houses would reach to the distance of 71,595,477 miles, and, calculated at ten stones each, their bodies would weigh 937,500,000 tons. What an amazing amount of mortality is here presented to our view! What a region of death is here! How gloomy is earth, with its vast vault for the dead, when contrasted with heaven, where the convulsive struggle, the dying strife, and the departing groans, so familiar to men on earth, are not felt, or seen, or heard, or feared at all.

No gloomy catacombs, or melancholy mausoleum, no graves of departed worth, or funeral ensigns, are found in that happy land. Their are no signs of weakness among the settlers in the better country; not one feeble person in all their tribes. There are no indications of old age, no furrowed cheeks, no hoary hairs; it is the climate where the invalids of earth, who depart hence in the Lord, are restored to perfect and perpetual health. Death has no jurisdiction there, no dominion, no existence; the dead are not there, nor the dying; it



is the land of the LIVING. To them death is dead, abolished, "swallowed up in victory!" Their nature knows no principle of dissolution or decay. They renew an immortal youth. Neither *can* they die any more, neither *shall* they die any more; for thus saith the Prince of life, "He that believeth in me shall never die." Theirs is a region of life. They inherit life, ETERNAL LIFE.

5. *Their blessed exemptions.*

"And there shall be no more curse." Rev. xxii. 3.

What a striking contrast there is betwixt this present evil world and the better country! Of the former it was said, to the first parent of mankind: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake:" "in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." But of the blessedness of the latter it is written, "And *there* shall be no more curse." *There* is the absence of all evil, and the presence of all good. How many sources of affliction of body and mind there are on earth, we know not; but this we know, there are none in heaven. How happy are the settlers there! Observe we:

(1.) *Their deliverance from pain.*

"Neither shall there be any more pain." Rev. xxi. 4.

They are strangers to the pains arising from *want* of the necessaries of life. They know nothing of the sensations of hunger and thirst, or cold and nakedness.



Poverty and distress are utterly unknown in that land that flows with milk and honey. There are no poor in all the land. For, however destitute they may have been in the wilderness, the first moment in Canaan makes them rich and increased in goods, and they have need of nothing: "And they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more." And there shall be no more pain arising from want. Neither shall there be any more pain arising from *weariness*. The pain arising from labor, of what nature, kind, or degree soever, is unknown among the blessed settlers in the better land. There shall be no more exhaustion, no aching limbs, no days of toil, or restless nights: "They rest from their labors." Neither shall there be any more pain arising from *sickness*. For, of all the mortal diseases that fill our bodies with pain, our minds with fear, our families with grief, our streets with mourning, and our sepulchres with the ashes of our friends, not one vestige is to be found among the happy settlers in that land of immortality. Ah, no! No burning fever is there, no wasting consumption, no chilling ague, no distorting rheum, no trembling nerves, no palpitating heart: "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." "Neither shall there be any more pain."

(2.) *Their freedom from sorrow.*

"And sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa.

Among the numberless millions in the glory regions, not one pang of sorrow is ever felt. There, weeping eyes, wounded spirits, and broken hearts, are not found. Their last tear was wiped away as they entered through the gates into the city. There is no *circumstantial sorrow*; there are no failures in business, no panics in trade, no want of employment, no embarrassment in circumstances; and, as there are no distresses, or disappointments, there is, as a consequence, no secular sorrow in the kingdom of heaven.

Neither shall there be any more *social sorrow*; for there are no treacherous friends, no abuse of confidence, nor disappointed hopes. There is no cruel husband, or unfaithful wife; no prodigal son, or undutiful daughter; no improvident parents, or desolate children; no widow's woes, or orphan's cries. There are no tears of bereavement: no more sighing at the grave of departed worth, saying, "Thou destroyest the hope of man." "Lover and friend hast thou put from me." "Childhood and youth are vanity." "All these things are against me, and bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave:"

"Their pain of life is ever o'er,  
Their anguish and distracting care;  
And sighing grief shall weep no more,  
And sin shall never enter there."

And there is no *religious sorrow*. None on their

own account ; none on account of others ; none on account of the family, the Church, or the world. For there is no ungodly father or mother, no irreligious husband or wife, no unbelieving brother or sister, no unconverted son or daughter ; neither is there an inconsistent professor, a formalist, an apostate, or hypocrite, in that pure and happy society. There are none mourning for the wickedness of the land ; no pious David saying, " Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." No priest weeping betwixt the porch and the altar ; no Paul telling often, even weeping, of the enemies of the cross of Christ ; no Jeremiah, saying, " O that my head were waters !" no tears like those of the blessed Jesus, when he wept over Jerusalem ; for " God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

6. *Their unspeakable privileges.*

"The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places."

Ps. xvi. 6.

Already we have spoken of the *negative* blessedness of the happy settlers in the better land, and have seen what the saints shall not suffer in heaven. Let us now consider what they shall enjoy. Now, to say that they are *exempt* from all evil, is not sufficient. Theirs is an inheritance of *positive* enjoyment. They are not only free from poverty, but they enjoy the abundance of perpetual plenty—are rich, and increased in goods—

endowed with the pearl of great price, the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is one thing to be for ever beyond the reach of contempt and ridicule ; of mockery, insult, ignominy, and persecution ; and another to be the object of respectful attention, the subject of gracious favor, and the successful candidate for the most glorious honors, and such honors have all the saints. To be perfectly and eternally free from the influences of pain and sorrow, is an unspeakable advantage ; but they are favored with still better immunities : their portion is “fulness of joy,” and their heritage “pleasures for evermore.”

Considered as a *place* of celestial enjoyment, then the happiness of heaven is ineffable ! unspeakable ! indescribable ! and inconceivable ! “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.” Is it spoken of as a *state* of felicity ? then it is bliss in the superlative degree. Is it a state of purity ? then its inhabitants are said to be “like Him” who is “glorious in holiness !” Is it a state of love ? then it is love that passeth knowledge ! Is it a state of peace ? then it is the peace of God that passeth all understanding ! Is it a state of joy ? then it is joy unspeakable and full of glory ! Is it a state of delightful hope—happiness in prospect as well as possession ? then it is a “blessed hope,” the hope of the glory of God. Is it a state of exemption ? then “God shall wipe away *all* tears from their eyes :”

“Not a groan, nor a pain, nor a tear,  
Not a grief, nor a wish, nor a sigh:  
Nor a cloud, nor a doubt, nor a fear,  
Can disturb their enjoyments on high.”

What saith the Lord concerning the happy settler in the better country, did you say? Here is the reply: “He shall eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” He shall be made “a ruler over many things.” “And I will give him the white stone, and I will write upon him my new name!” “And I will give him the morning star!” And what else? “I will give him a crown of life!” And what next? “He shall sit with me on my throne!” And what beside? “He shall inherit all things!”

Having exhausted human language of negations, and impoverished it for assertions, the inspired writers proceed from negative and positive descriptions of the settler’s privileges to the use of *comparatives*, and seek, by the most striking figures, to represent the glories which language fails to express; and, because none of these figures, separately, can fully represent the glories of the better land and its happy inhabitants, they are multiplied, until we have line upon line, on the interesting subject.

Now heaven is compared to the glorious *goal*, where the spiritual *racer* has finished his course, and received his prize—“a crown of life.” Then it is compared to the securely defended *citadel*, where the Christian war-

*rior*, having fought the good fight of faith, "lays hold on eternal life." By *one* it is compared to the destined *port*, where the spiritual *mariner* runs into harbor—the "desired haven," where he drops his anchor and moors his bark, having realized the object of his highest hope, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul." By *another* it is spoken of as the pilgrim's *rest*, where the wayworn traveller of Zion, having shaken the dust of this world from his feet, puts off his sandals, lays aside his friendly staff, and reposes in peaceful abodes and quiet regions, where "there remaineth a rest to the people of God."

By *Peter* it is set forth as an *inheritance* that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. By *Paul* it is called a *house* of Divine architecture, "a building of God," eternal in the heavens. By the *apostle* it is described as a *city*—"a city of habitation," where the settlers enjoy the same glorious immunities as the native population, who have their citizenship within its jasper walls and pearly portals. By the *prophet* it is spoken of as a *kingdom*. And, of course, as "the kingdom of heaven," it has its thrones and its crowns; and hence the privileges of its subjects are represented by the honors of a Prince and the glory of a King. By the *patriarch* it is viewed as a good land, and desired as a most delightful *country*, where the wandering Israel of God find a permanent settlement.



*Here* it is compared to a *happy home*, where the children of the family of heaven, and the household of faith, have their final meeting-place. It is our *Father's house* with many mansions, where the penitent-pardoned prodigals returned, and the obedient sons of God, are happily grouped together, and bask in the enjoyment of their Heavenly Father's approving smile. *There* we are introduced to a splendid *banquet*, the invitation to which is, "Come, for all things are ready:" "For the Spirit and the bride say, Come." Come, and welcome: fill the guest-chamber; crowd the mansion; put on the wedding-garment; surround the festal board; and join in the nuptial song, "For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." And *yonder* it is compared to a magnificent temple, where the people of God of all ages, all nations, and all denominations, meet to celebrate the universal *jubilee* of all worlds; where all the prodigals that Christ has pardoned, and the publicans that he has forgiven, and the thieves that he has rescued from perdition, and the sinners that he has converted into saints, meet in one general assembly; where all the weeping eyes that he has wiped behold his glory, and all the broken hearts that he hath healed dance for joy, and every tongue that he hath loosened sings the song of Moses and the Lamb; and where the assembled and happy universe shouts for joy, saying, with a loud voice, "Blessing, and

honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

7. *Their proportionate happiness.*

"He shall reward every man according to his works." Matt. xvi. 27.

Although all the saints in glory are perfectly happy, we have no reason to believe that they are equally so. It is not reasonable to believe that infants will at once be capable of the same degree of enjoyment in heaven as the Apostle Paul, who, in his way to the kingdom, passed through a martyrdom of suffering "for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God." Neither is it scriptural to entertain the idea that such as only obtained salvation in a dying-hour will possess the same degree of happiness in the world to come, as the faithful Christian who spent an active lifetime in the service of Jesus Christ. And agreeable to these sentiments are the teachings of Scripture on this subject: "As one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead:" "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory:" "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be," saith the Lord. From Divine revelation it appears that we shall all be exalted to heaven, if we receive not the grace of God in vain; because Jesus Christ died for us. But

we shall be rewarded in heaven with different degrees of enjoyment: "Every man according to his works." For "he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully."

It would seem from the Scriptures that there is a *general blessedness* that is common to all the saints in light, and a *particular blessedness* which each enjoys according to his works. As, for example, they all dwell in the same Father's house with many mansions, and are citizens of the same glorious metropolis. They, too, are alike blessed, as to their state of freedom from all possible evil, and in their enjoyment of the same description of positive good. They all mingle with the same pure and happy society; and they may be all engaged in the same delightful employment. To dwell in this glorious place, to enjoy this unutterably blessed state, is alike the portion of the infant of days departed, and the hoary pilgrim saint of fourscore years—of the comparative babe in Christ, and the Christian patriarch of the Israel of God; and this is what we mean by the general blessedness of the happy settlers in the better land.

But the departed in Christ, who have devoted their time, talents, and lives to the service of their Lord and Master, enjoy a *particular blessedness* in addition to this general good of glory. Of these it is said, they rest

from their labors. Having cultivated the Lord's vineyard, they have the wages of their work to receive. They composed the army and fought the battles of the King of kings, and have the bounty of their Sovereign to receive, and the pension of heaven to enjoy. Some of them had houses and land ; and having sold them, and brought the price and laid it at the apostle's feet, they have the interest to receive—compound interest, at cent. per cent., Heaven's good old hundred-fold. Others of them were kept on short allowance in the wilderness, only because they were not fit to be trusted with more ; and these will have the balance to receive in Canaan. Many have had much to suffer for Christ ; but all his suffering saints shall have their recompense. No man shall serve God for naught. No man shall labor for Christ without remuneration, or suffer for him without requital ; or sacrifice his ease, his property, or his life for the Lord, without ample compensation in the life to come. There are wages for his laborers, pensions for his warriors, recompenses for all his suffering saints : "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous."

When they rest from their labors, "their works do follow them : " works of *charity*, every act of benevolence, every favor bestowed on a disciple of Christ ; the princely donations of the rich, the hard-earned penny of the poor man, and the widow's mite ; the cup of cold water contributed by the peasant, and the conse-

crated estate of the peer, to the cause of Jesus Christ, will be rewarded in heaven. Every case of distress relieved, every orphan's heart made to sing for joy, and every widow's tears wiped away, by the hand of Christian sympathy, will be remembered and recompensed : these "shall in nowise lose their reward."

"Their works do follow them:" works of *piety*. Every work of faith, every labor of love ; every prayer in the closet, the family, and the church ; every reproof to the ungodly, in public or private ; every warning to sinners ; every exhortation to saints ; every effort to spread the fame of Jesus in the Tract Society, the Sabbath-school, the Bible, Missionary, and other Christian societies ; every journey performed ; every sermon preached ; every soul converted ; every believer comforted ; yea, and every ardent desire thus to "work the works of Him that sent you," will heighten the joy of your song, and burnish the brightness of your crown for ever. Every groan, every pain, and every tear ; all your griefs, and wishes, and sighs in the kingdom and patience of Christ, will follow you to the skies, and find their reward in heaven : "their works do follow them." Let us resolve, then, to be persevering workers, and patient sufferers ; and thus secure a full reward ; for, as we sow during seed-time, we shall reap in harvest ; and the extent of our happiness in heaven will be according to our works on earth.



8. *Their delightful employment.*

"The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." Ps. cxi. 2.

It is certainly revealed to us in the Scriptures that the happy settlers in the better country are actively engaged in the most delightful service of their gracious Sovereign ; for "the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him." And this is consistent with the idea of perfect happiness ; for Adam, in his pristine innocence and joy, was placed in the garden of Eden to dress and to keep it. Many are the conjectures that have been hazarded by religious philosophers as to the precise nature of the employments of the redeemed in the kingdom of heaven. And if the reader is desirous to see the subject treated in a philosophic and scientific manner, he will find ample gratification and profit by consulting Dr. Dick on "The Future State."

Now we think it is implied in the Scriptures that one branch of the employment of the redeemed in heaven will be to study the works of *Creation* ; for it is written : "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." And there is no reason to suppose that the saints in heaven are less pleased by a contemplation of the wonderful works of God than they were on earth. And if we admit the theory of modern astronomers, who say that there are



millions of worlds in the immensity of space of much greater magnitude and glory than this terraqueous globe ; then how will such a mind as the Psalmist had, which delighted in the contemplation of the celestial scenery, luxuriate in the amazing discoveries that will break on his astonished vision, from the elevated observatory of the Paradise of God ! If, while on earth, when he saw the moon walking in brightness, and the stars floating in their fathomless and shoreless ethereal ocean, he was overwhelmed with astonishment at the magnitude and glory of his Creator's works, how will David and his astronomical associates in heaven expatiate in these glory regions ; and, after contemplating world after world, and exploring system after system, return from their immeasurably distant excursions to worship at the Creator's throne, and publish the result of their discoveries, saying : "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty." And the same may be true of the other branches of study peculiar to differently constituted but equally pious minds. Whatever is lovely and of good report on earth, may possibly, in every practicable case, be perpetuated and perfected in heaven.

"The great Teacher sent from God" plainly asserted to his disciples and followers that what they knew not then, they should know hereafter. Hence it is likely that the works of *Providence* will engage the glorified

minds of the redeemed in heaven. It is more than probable that the volume of Providence will be open for the perusal of such more especially as have been much the children of suffering in the present world ; and that they will be permitted to know the reasons which have influenced the Divine Being in all his dealings with them, so as at once to be able to justify the ways of God with man. And with what interest will the *historian* pore over the pages of this great and glorious chronicle of all events that have transpired from the creation up to the present hour !

Here the merchant may find a record of the reason of his reverses in trade ; and the mariner the causes of his losses at sea ; and the poor the design of their being kept in their low estate. The widow and the orphan, and all the children of sorrow, may probably discover that in the stretching forth of the Almighty's hand to pluck them as brands from the fire, a lucrative business had to be destroyed, a splendid vessel wrecked, a majestic mill demolished ; or that a husband, a wife, a child, or a parent, a brother, a sister, or a friend, who stood in the way of their salvation, had to be pushed into the tomb in order to bring them safe to heaven. And when they discover that every dispensation and event that occurred in relation to them, from the cradle to the grave, was designed for their good, and had a direct tendency to bring them to glory, how will they

bless God *for the rod, and kiss* the hand that used it! And especially if they find it recorded there: "This is the last means to be tried, and if it fails the case is hopeless, for this rebel heart can be brought to heaven in no other way." And when they see how near they have wandered to the verge of hell, and find themselves in heaven at last, with what satisfaction will they review the history of the past dealings of a merciful God with them and their families! When they see, as with a sunbeam, how all things have been working together for their good,

"How high in heaven this note will swell,  
My Saviour hath done all things well!"

"Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

That *redemption*, the chief of the works of God, calls forth the most active energies and most delightful contemplations of the immortal minds of the happy settlers in the better land, is abundantly testified in the New Testament. The chief object of attraction is "the Lamb, as it had been slain, in the midst of the throne." The people of God cease not to think of the stable, and the garden, and the cross, when they get to heaven. Ah no! Bethlehem will never be forgotten in that better land! Gethsemane will move all the harps of heaven to highest notes and sweetest song!

New views of Calvary will continually present themselves. Fresh glories will gather for ever about the

cross of Jesus! Christ, and him crucified, will be felt with a thousandfold attraction by the whole school of disciples, and be studied with ten thousandfold interest by the whole college of professors and divines in the heavenly institution. Doctors of divinity will graduate to higher degrees of theological distinction in the university of Glory. The Child of the manger, the despised Son of Nazareth, the hated Man of Galilee, and the bleeding Victim of the altar of the world's temple—the dying Lamb of God, will be studied, and honored, and sung, world without end. The great High Priest of our profession, and his Divine atonement, the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of his redeeming love, will engage and enrapture the ransomed for ever. Here are wonders, and glories, and delights, that infinitely transcend all else, even in heaven. “Worthy the Lamb that was slain!”—this theme will never grow old. The new song will be sweetest, and loudest, and longest, in the glorious programme of the jubilee services. Of all heaven's harmonious anthems, redemption by Christ is the hallelujah chorus: “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, unto him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever.”

9. *Their glorious Christianity.*

“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew; but Christ is all and in all.” Col. iii. 11.

Vile as the redeemed in heaven once were, their salvation is universally so complete, that among them there is not one sinful thought or unholy desire. No improper motive is felt, no unkind look is seen, no angry word is spoken, no ungenerous act is practiced. They are holy in the highest degree—as holy as Adam in his pristine innocence, and spotless as angels who are transcendent in purity. They are like Jesus Christ, the immaculate Lamb, shining forth in the image of God, who is “glorious in holiness”—justified, sanctified, and glorified. They have “one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” one glorious system of religion, in which all are united. God hath fashioned their hearts alike. They “worship God.” Whatever may have been their sectional distinctions in the Church militant, they have no denominational shibboleths in the Church triumphant. There is no Roman Catholicism, no Episcopalianism, no Presbyterianism, no Congregationalism, no Methodism, or Baptism, nor any other *ism*, except *Christianism*, among the happy settlers in the promised land.

“What ho! Father Abraham!” said Mr. Whitefield, when once preaching at Philadelphia, “whom have you in heaven? Any Episcopalians?” “No.” “Any Presbyterians?” “No.” “Any Baptists?” “No.” “Have you any Methodists there?” “No.” “Any Independents, or Covenanters, or Burghers, or Anti-Burghers?”



“No.” “Whom, then, have you in heaven?” cried the impassioned preacher. “We know not any of those names here : all who are here are Christians, believers in Christ ; men who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb.” None of the bigoted differences or sectarian distinctions of earth are suffered to enter heaven ; the best of them belong only to the present state, and will be lost among the “lumber of demolished worlds.” They are all Christians in Christ, and Christ is all in all. They see alike, know alike, feel alike, and love alike in heaven. One song employs all nations, and all cry, “Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us.” “They shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”

They have no creeds to contend for, no canons to insist upon, no errors to controvert or *protest* against ; no rituals, or liturgies, or other politics or matters of doctrine or discipline to dispute over or *dissent* from. They have no heresies to uproot, no aggressions to resist, no schisms to lament, no breaches to heal, no differences to settle ; for there is no ecclesiastical tyranny, or lay rebellion, no priestly despotism, no people’s complaining or dictation. They are a kingdom of priests and kings : “Perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” There is no wrangler or sower of discord, no disputer or busybody in other men’s matters in that holy fraternity above.



Each is concerned for the happiness of all, and all are interested for the good of each. One interest engages them, one spirit influences them, and one celestial temple-home cheers them. Bickering is banished from their blessed abode ; strife stays away, and anger is left off before it is meddled with. Love and unity bind them together as the heart of one. Harmony and concord pervade every bosom, righteousness and truth govern every spirit, peace and joy fill every bounding heart, benevolence prompts every thought, every word, every work, and holiness decks every scene in all the beauty of perfect innocence and perpetual charms. Such is heaven.

10. *Their jubilant worship.*

“And serve him day and night in his temple.” Rev. vii. 15.

It will be admitted that the present state is one of tuition, preparatory to the future life of immortality, as well as a state of trialship and probation. And it is probable in the highest degree that Christians on earth are receiving lessons in the elementary principles and practices that will form the basis of all their acquirements and services in heaven for ever. All analogy leads us to this conclusion. Parents who design their children to follow the pursuits of agriculture, do not send them to sea to learn the art of navigation. Teachers who desire their pupils to become proficient in law,

do not confine their attention to the study of physic. And masters who intend their servants to labor with success in the printing of books, do not send them to delve in a quarry, or grope in a mine. And as the all-wise Creator designs human beings for his own service and glory for ever, it is *probable* that he is teaching them the a-b-c of that language, the rudiments of that knowledge, and the first principles of that service in his temples on earth, which will be perpetuated and perfected in heaven.

Strange as it may seem, it is not improbable that something analogous to the spirit of *prayer* is felt and expressed by that part of the congregation who have already arrived in the glorious temple above. Perhaps you are aware what holy longings the people of God sometimes feel in the dwellings of his love, when they are waiting for the arrival of a beloved minister, and the commencement of the sanctuary services. Big with expectation of descending grace, they long for the moment to arrive which makes them joyful in the house of prayer ; and it is not unlikely that similar feelings pervade the minds of the glorified in the heavenly house of God. They are there a little earlier than some of their brethren, whose engagements have detained them awhile longer in the wilderness ; and they seem to long for the arrival of the period when the last saint shall enter heaven, and when, all the congrega-

tion having arrived, the door of the universal temple shall be shut, and the great High Priest of the celestial house of God shall open the jubilee service that shall be continued day and night in this glorious sanctuary. Until then they may often say, "How long, O Lord, holy and true? How long, O Lord, dost thou not let thy kingdom come?"

*Thanksgiving* forms a prominent part of the services of the temple of God in the world to come. How unspeakably happy we have occasionally been, when, after suffering temptation, affliction, and persecution in the wilderness, we have assembled with saints on earth in the tabernacle of the congregation, to "offer unto God thanksgiving, and to pay our vows unto the Most High!" What tranquillized feelings we have experienced on the holy Sabbath morn! what soothing influences! what grateful sensibilities! what melting sympathies, gushing emotions, and sacred joys we have felt at the throne of grace! What, then, shall we feel in heaven, when we look back to the "hole of the pit whence we were digged, and to the rock whence we were hewn?" When we remember the crimes forgiven, the favors bestowed, and the long-suffering exercised toward us; when we look from the heights of heaven into the deep perdition of hell, from which we have been rescued as "brands from the fire," what an offering of thanks shall we present to our Deliverer in glory! What a cloud of

grateful incense will encircle his throne! What blessings shall we who were ready to perish pour forth unto Him who found us on a dunghill, and exalted us to his throne! Prostrate in adoration at his feet, or striking the harps of heaven in holy ecstasies of joy and transport, how will the arches of heaven's vast temple echo with our songs of thanksgiving! "Thanks be unto God, who caused us to triumph in Christ!" "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever!"

*Hearing the word of God* forms another important part of Divine service in his earthly temples; and many good men of high attainments and office, such as Dr. Watts, and Dr. Dick, and many others of equal piety and parts, are of opinion that it will be an occasional entertainment in heaven; and there is nothing in this that is opposed either to reason or Scripture. How much we are interested from time to time when we hear the word of God expounded by men of like passions with ourselves! How delighted we have often been to hear the mysteries of godliness unfolded by ministers on earth, taught of God! Our spirits have been revived, our hearts hallowed, our prospects brightened again and again; and while tasting of the good word of God, we have felt the powers of the world to come. What, then, shall we feel if we are permitted to listen to the thrilling eloquence of celestial lecturers?

What touching discourses will “just men made perfect” pour forth! What sufferings will martyrs and confessors, and the persecuted of every age and nation, narrate! What sermons will Wesley, and Whitefield, and Fletcher preach! What missionary speeches from Clowes, and Coke, and Carey, and Williams; from John, and Peter, and Paul, and the other apostles; from prophets, and patriarchs, and all other eminent servants of Christ, of ancient and modern days! and, infinitely above all, from CHRIST, the head of the Church universal!

But will he address the assembly? Perhaps he will; it is not improbable; for he said to his disciples, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now;” and he may be graciously pleased to enter the grand pulpit of the temple of the universe, and expatiate on the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*, for the instruction of his ransomed Church: “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them”—with knowledge and understanding—“shall communicate to them every thing calculated to secure, continue, and increase their happiness;” “and shall lead them unto living fountains of water”—to the discovery of new sources of heavenly enjoyment for ever.

And if this be so, how clearly will he explain the strange method whereby all things have conspired together to bring many sons to glory; and, having cleared up the *past*, he may expatiate on the *present*,



and exhibit the glories of heaven in a thousand aspects, more and more glorious than ever its astonished inhabitants have seen them before. From the past and the present, he may conduct the listening and exulting millions of his glorified audience away into the excessively glorious and interminable *future*. And having shown them the glories of the country as far as immortal eyes can gaze, and wide as they can measure, as deep as they can sound, and high as they can soar, he may add these words: "Ineffable and glorious as all this is, it is for *ever* and *ever*!"

O what lectures could he give on creation's wondrous works! What light could he pour on the dark dispensations of Providence! What a story could he tell of the manger, of the garden, and of the cross! What sermons could he preach about unbounded grace! and what revelations could he discover about eternal glory! How vauntingly we speak of our commodious chapels, extensive synagogues, and splendid cathedrals; but how do the domes of Canterbury, and York, and Westminster dwindle into insignificance in comparison with this holy habitation! Men boast of their crowded congregations, of *intelligent* hearers: let them look up yonder, and never boast again! Boast, indeed, of your beautiful discourses, splendid speeches, and eloquent orations; you must go yonder for matter, and arrangement! for *sublimity*! and DIVINITY! and GLORY!



Here are sermons! Go into the shades, ye downy doctors, and theological professors, and masters of arts! Hear ye him, and learn of him, who speaks as never man spake, ye schoolmen of all ages and nations! He is the Master of assemblies! the supreme Rabbi! the Teacher Divine! "His doctrine drops as the rain, and his speech distils as the dew." Talk of your lively meetings: what feeling is here! do not their "hearts burn within them?" is it not "good to be there?" Is not that the house of God—the gate of heaven? Look at that happy assembly: every eye sparkles with delight; every countenance beams with complacency, every heart bounds with ecstasy. See how they hang on his lips, thrilled through and through; now entranced and breathless, and then bursting forth in one simultaneous hosanna to the Son of David, filling the ample dome of heaven with one seraphic song of "Glory to the bleeding Lamb!"

*Singing the praises of God* is another of the delightful exercises of the people of God in his sanctuaries here. Sometimes, however, we pitch our tunes too low, and our singing drags heavily; at other times we set them too high, and then we are distressed, and frequently break down; but when we have a tune that has been composed by spirits akin to the celestial choristers, and a hymn that has been written at the dictation of the chief musician, and, having struck them on

the key-note, we join in concert to sing and make melody in our hearts unto the Lord, we are inspired, elevated, charmed, and blessed, to such a degree, as sometimes constrains us to say,

“My willing soul would stay  
In such a frame as this,  
And sit and sing herself away  
To everlasting bliss.”

Now, if we feel some of our most delightful emotions under the sweet soothing influences of melody in the temples below, then what may we expect to experience in the temple above, where all are taught the science of celestial harmony; all understand music, all master musicians, all first-rate vocalists, all in time, all in tune, all in concert! What favorite airs are here! What performers—what songs—what melodies are here! What seraphic sounds, and hallelujah choruses, and ceaseless charms are here! Here is harmony perfect; music immortal; song celestial; transport Divine! This is the song of Moses and the Lamb—the new song—the song of the redeemed—the song of angels—the song of degrees, everlasting degrees: “And again they said HALLELUJAH!”

Such, then, is the wondrous history, the incalculable number, and the high intellectual attainments of the happy settlers in the better land. How blessed their immortality! How complete is their deliverance from

pain of body! How perfect their exemption from sorrow of mind! What glorious privileges are theirs! What delightful employments! What a blessed religious society is here! And O, how interesting is their celestial worship! Are you desiring to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, in the kingdom of God? Will you go to the glorious jubilee services of the temple of God in the heavenly Jerusalem? Will you be a member of this Church, and enjoy those glorious privileges? You have many relations in the better country. Your best friends are there. Your best friends on earth are going thither; and will you be left behind? God forbid! Go at once to Christ; secure your passport to the better land; set out now for the kingdom; and may the King of glory grant you an eternal portion among the happy settlers in the promised land! Amen, and Amen!

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE EMIGRANT'S GUIDE.

“Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel.”—PSALM lxxiii. 24.

HAVING attempted to prove the existence of a future and a better state; and having furnished you with brief sketches of the place, of the character of the Governor, of the conduct of the natives, and of the privileges of the settlers there, and assuming that you are asking, What shall I do to inherit glory? we now direct your attention to the Holy Bible, which is the Christian's infallible guide to heaven. It is replete with every information necessary for the traveller to Zion, being “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, and for instruction in righteousness.” While travellers in locomotive chariots have their time-tables and guides; while pedestrians have their maps and directories; and while mariners have their charts and compasses, the Christian has his Bible, which we take the liberty to designate “The Spiritual Emigrant's Infallible Guide to the Better Country.” Observe here,

1. *The infallible truth of its directions.*

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. iii. 16.

The Holy Bible must either be the production of wicked or of righteous men. Now, that wicked men should write a book, the perusal of which is every way calculated to trouble their consciences, and that dooms them at last to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, is a thing so unlikely, as scarcely to come within the range of possibility; and it would certainly stagger the belief of the most credulous, to entertain the idea for one moment, that so much holy precept and pure instruction as we find in the Bible, could spring from such an impure fountain, and flow in such copious streams from such an unholy source. And for good men to write such a book, and declare that they were inspired by God, unless it were so, is an absolute impossibility. Hence the conclusion is inevitable, that the Bible is a book of Divine inspiration, written by holy men of old, who wrote and spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The fulfilment of the predictions of Holy Writ, such as the dispersion of the Jews, the coming of Christ, and the destruction of Jerusalem, are so many evidences of the infallible truth of this guide to heaven. The prophets, for example, could scarcely have written a more accurate history of Jesus Christ had they lived in his

day, and been his constant attendants, than that which may easily be gathered from the predictions which, hundreds of years before he came, they uttered of him. One speaks of his miraculous conception ; another, of the place of his nativity ; and another, of the time when he should be born ; while one pointed out the particular nation, another discovered the tribe, and a third mentioned the very family whence he should spring. The place of his residence, the rejection of his mediation, the influence of his teaching, the character of his miracles, his betrayal, his life, his death, his burial, his resurrection and ascension, are almost as minutely described by the prophets, as they are narrated by the evangelists.

On the subject of the authenticity of the Christian's Bible, Dr. Clarke says, "On a thorough conviction, I assume the fact, that the sacred writings are a Divine record, a revelation from God." "In morals and religion," says the Rev. W. Cooke, "the Holy Bible is our only infallible guide. Where the moralist hesitates, it speaks with authority ; and where the philosopher conjectures, it determines with certainty. It throws off the dark veil that concealed from our view our Maker, ourselves, and the visions of the eternal world." Here, then, is the charter of the Christian's privileges, and his infallible guide to the better country, adapted alike to be the companion of the pilgrim of the first, and the



emigrant to glory of the nineteenth century. Ages have discovered no necessity to reform it. Different generations have seen no need to modify its sublime and holy principles and teachings. It never needs revising ; for it never had an error in it. There is nothing imperfect in it, nothing redundant. Every word of the book as it came from God is truth, and every page has received the last revision and improvements of its Divine Author. The guide to heaven is complete, perfect, stereotyped in brass eternal ; it is immortal as its Author, and worthy of him.

2. *Its general descriptions of the better land.*

“Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life.” John v. 39.

The oracles of God contain all that it is important for you to know of the *history* of the kingdom of heaven ; and a diligent perusal of them will make you familiar with its antiquity, and give you every necessary information about the place from the beginning. Here is the chronicle of its epochs, the record of its mighty acts, the narrative of its trophies, and the memorial of its triumphs. Here you are furnished with its code of laws, form of government, its wealth, and fame, and glory.

The Bible may be considered to supply the place of a magnificent *map* of the better land. It shows you the holy city, and favors you with a correct and most delightful view of its imperial palaces, and its glorious

and eternal throne. Here you may find the position of its pacific ocean, mark the bounds of its crystal sea, trace the windings of its immortal river, and discover the situation of its tree of life ; and here you will find that, if you are willing, it may be your happiness hereafter to enjoy a permanent residence there.

It is a correct *geography* of heaven. Assisted by this Divine revelation, you may learn all that is necessary to know of the immensity of its celestial plains, the eternity of its mountain ranges, and the infinity of its blissful regions. Here you have every requisite information concerning the vast capabilities and the immense population of the better country, and the blissful pursuits, glorious privileges, and manners and customs of its happy people. Let us attend, then, to the Saviour's injunction, "Search the Scriptures." Revere the Bible, love the Bible, read the Bible, and practice the Bible.

3. *Its suggested motives for leaving Egypt.*

"Come out of her, that ye receive not of her plagues."  
Rev. xviii. 4.

A diligent perusal of the book of God will convince you that, whatever may be their rank or station in the present evil world, there is no peace to the wicked in *life*, and that God is angry with them every day. This is the faithful biography of the man who forgets to fear God and prepare for eternity, where his departing

*scene* is portrayed by a master hand. Here you behold him on his dying-couch, writhing with mental agony. This is the record of his sad recollections, and bitter, but too late, relentings and dying regrets ; it shows how he mourns at the last when his flesh and his body are consumed, saying, "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof!" For thus it is written, "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness:" chased out of the world—transported away in chains, uttering the heart-rending language of hopeless despair : "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved." It then calls you to witness his distress and anguish on the morning of the *resurrection*, as he issues from the tomb, amid the thunders and lightnings, the blackness and darkness, and horrible tempest, and all the terrific scenes of the last day, crying to the rocks, as they rend, to the elements, as they melt with fervent heat, and to the mountains, as they roll to feed the general flame, "Fall on me ! hide ME from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Here you will learn that to realize the actual scene, and feel the terrors of these mere preliminaries to the great assize, were nothing when compared to the sinner's tremblings at the august sight of the *judgment-seat* of Christ : here is woe ! here is anguish indescribable, overwhelming, unutterable ! O ! that most dread-

ful privation involved in the sentence of the bar of God, "Depart, ye cursed!" depart from *me*! That sight of heaven, and that weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, at the last look at "Paradise lost!" How heart-rending are those touching representations of the finally impenitent at the last judgment, which are furnished in the Scriptures as motives to induce men to come out of Egypt, and "escape for their lives." Nor is this all, nor is this *half* that is there revealed: "For the wicked shall be turned into hell, where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever." Now remember that these things are written for our warning: our fears are thus addressed and alarmed, "lest we should tarry in Egypt, and partake of its plagues, and come at last to this place of torment." "Here, strongest motives sting; here, sacred violence assaults the soul, and nothing but compulsion is forborne." O for shelter in religion here, and refuge in heaven hereafter!

4. *Its encouragements for emigrants to Canaan.*

"I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey." Lev. xx. 24.

Having appealed to man's fears, and alarmed him by the terrors of hell, the oracles of God present another class of motives, which are addressed to his hopes, as inducements to emigrate to the celestial Canaan. *Now,*

they speak to him of the goodness of God, and of the dying love of Christ. *Ever*, they present to him the pleasures of piety in life ; and *anon*, they remind him of the Christian's peace in a dying-hour, and his immortal happiness in the Paradise of God. *Here* you are told that the most abandoned sinners have been changed into saints of the first magnitude and glory ; and assured that heaven is open to all, and free for all that repent and believe the gospel ; and that all are welcome to its glorious immunities. It declares that the young are old enough, and the aged are not too old ; that the poor are rich enough, and the rich may become sufficiently poor, and that even the sick are healthy enough, to perform the journey to the better country.

It points to numbers who have crossed over Jordan in safety, who went from the country where you reside, from the city that you inhabit, and perhaps from the family of which you are a member. It shows that they certainly had the same journey to travel, the same hills to climb, and the same rivers to ford, the same foes to face, and the same battles to fight, as the emigrants of modern days, who are "asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward." Then be of good cheer, fellow-travellers to Zion ; an innumerable company from hence have arrived in the better land : take courage, ye fearful saints ; be strong, ye feeble ones ; press for-



ward, ye halting Christians ; the country is open before you, the good land is yours : " Go up, and possess it."

5. "*The best time to start.*

" Now is the accepted time." 2 Cor. vi. 2.

The emigrant's guide to the glory land abounds with reasons which are designed to convince mankind that the best time to start for the better country is JUST NOW. Every reason that is adduced has a peculiar bearing on the present time ; and yet how many are deferring religion to what they vainly call " a more convenient season !" Procrastination is the snare of youth, the illusion of maturer life, and the delusion of hoary age : it lurks in every path, and steals upon every class of society. It is Satan's most subtle and successful stratagem in effecting the ruin of immortal souls. It is the gilded snare by which men are entangled in the beggarly elements of the world. It is the fatal spell that binds them more and more closely to the flesh-pots and abominations of spiritual Egypt, and the deadly opiate that is lulling the great mass of mankind into the awful sleep of deathless death ; and yet it is written in the Bible, as with a sunbeam, that nothing can possibly be gained by delay in setting out for the kingdom of glory.

Here you may learn that you will never have less *opposition* to encounter in the way to heaven, in the future, than you would have at the present time : that



continuance in sin will not weaken the depravity of your *own evil heart*; that the *world* will oppose you as determinately at the end of fifty years as it could do to-day; and that the *devil*, whenever you resolve to prepare for the better land, will be your unwearied adversary still. Here you are assured that you will not have greater *assistance* vouchsafed in the future than that which is offered at the present period; that, so far as your salvation depends upon *yourself*, you have all the ability to secure a meetness for heaven to-day that you ever will have, or ever can have; that, so far as it depends on the instrumentality of the *Church*, good men would be as ready to instruct you, and would as gladly shout for joy at your deliverance to-day, as they would at some distant period; and that, so far as it depends on the influence of the *Spirit of God*, he will never be more able or willing to pardon your guilt, to sanctify your nature, and prepare you for a lot among the glorified, than he is to-day; for he is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Here you will find that you will never have stronger *motives* to leave Babylon, or greater allurements to set out for heaven, than you have now; that no other means will be used to persuade you to repent; and that if the motives addressed to your hopes and fears in the gospel fail to move you to seek for the better country, no other could succeed: "For if they hear not Moses and

the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." And having assured you that nothing can be gained by delay, the Bible unequivocally shows that much is lost and every thing hazarded thereby. It then shows that by present repentance you will secure the pleasures and profit of godliness on earth, and "a far more exceeding weight of glory" when you get to heaven. And thus it makes it certain that the best time to start for the promised land is *now: to-day, this hour, this moment*: "*Now is the accepted time.*"

6. *The only person to apply to for a passport.*

"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." John vi. 68.

The gift of life everlasting is in the Lord Jesus Christ. "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Now suppose a poor sinner should go to Moses—to the *moral law*, to seek a passport to the better country: let him learn its precepts, and resolve on obedience to its requirements, and he will find it impossible to merit the favor of God, and gain the kingdom of heaven, by the works of the law. The law of Moses cries, "Give, give," and "Do, do," but never says, "It is enough;" for, after *fallen* man has done his best, and given his all to satisfy its claims, its thunders peal, its lightnings flash, its anathemas are enunciated: "Cursed is

every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Pronounced accursed after all his efforts to comply with the requirements of the moral law, let him now repair to the altars of Aaron, and seek for the expiation of his guilt and acceptance with God, through the medium of the sacrifices of the *ceremonial law*. Let him build everywhere an altar, and at all times offer sacrifice: let him burn the forests of Lebanon, and sacrifice the cattle upon a thousand hills; yet the Scriptures assure us that it is impossible for the "blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin," and that "Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof for a burnt-offering." "For who hath required this at your hands?" saith the Lord. "Bring no more vain oblations: your incense is an abomination unto me; your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them." Thus you perceive that he will not see you if you seek to appear before him with no better blood than Aaron shed. When ye stretch forth your hands, he will hide his eyes from you and your costliest offerings; and though you make many prayers, except you have a diviner name than Moses in them, he will not hear. There is not one gleam of hope for a poor penitent sinner of these last days in either the moral or ceremonial law.

Let him now seek the favor and image of God

through the medium of *voluntary suffering*. Let him repent in dust and ashes, cover himself with sackcloth, weep day and night, and refuse all earthly enjoyment ; let him endure all the penances of Rome, and all the cruelties of heathenism ; let him perform his tedious pilgrimages by day, and lie down upon his bed of spikes by night, lest sleep should ease his eyes, and slumber refresh his eyelids ; and though he may devote his life to the most painful acts of self-immolation, and consent for his body to broil on the funeral piles of blind superstition, as the ground of his acceptance with God ; yet, after all his doings, and all his sacrifices, and all his sufferings, his sin remains ; his guilt remains ; his misery remains ; his condemnation remains ! Clouds and darkness are round about Jehovah still ! “ For all this, his anger is not turned away ! ” It thunders and lightens still. There is in all this no atonement for sin. Poor, broken-hearted sinner, crying, at the end of fifty years of such doings, and sacrifices, and sufferings, “ What shall I do to inherit eternal life ? ” “ What must he do to be saved ? ” Let him turn to Jesus crucified ! Let him look to Calvary, and flee to Christ, and believe on him. What then ? His chains fall off : his heart is free ! And what next ? Now he receives his title : here he obtains credentials : the Son of God grants him a passport to glory, and “ he goes on his way rejoicing.” Would that he had come to Jesus at

first! "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

7. *The proper way to travel.*

"It shall be called the way of holiness." Isa. xxxv. 8.

This guide to heaven will show you that the way of practical piety is the *easiest* way to travel. If Peter had confessed his Lord and Master, he would not have then fallen so foully, and injured himself so much that he had to weep bitterly. If David had kept in the way of holy obedience, he would not have fallen so fatally, and bruised his limbs, and dislocated his joints, and broken his bones, as he did. And if Israel of old had obeyed the voice of the Lord, they would not have had so many turnings and windings, and weary wanderings in the wilderness, as they had; they would have gone much sooner, and nearer, and happier, to Canaan, than they did: "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, saith the Lord. I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries." They would have had little trouble themselves; for the Lord would have fought their battles, and led them in a right way to a city of habitation. It was not his wish to keep them on short allowance, and shut them up in bare pastures. But they could not carry corn, nor behave themselves with wine; for when he gave them butter of kine, and



milk of sheep, and fat of rams, they “waxed fat, and kicked against God;” and hence, he had to alter their diet, to reduce their allowance, and bring them low with affliction—to stint them, and keep them hardly bestead and hungry. Yet he had no pleasure in feeding them with the bread of adversity, nor in giving them the water of affliction to drink. “He should have fed them, also, with the finest of wheat, and with honey out of the rock should he have satisfied them.” Surely the way of transgressors is hard! How pathetically the Divine Being adverts to the waywardness of his ancient people: “O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

That the way of uniform obedience is the *plainest* way to heaven, is manifest from the Scriptures. The footprints of travellers gone before, have rendered the way through the wilderness a well-beaten track; and especially manifest are the footsteps of Christ in the midst of the path. There are houses of prayer, and Bibles, and ministers, and Christians, all along the way; and if ever you come to a theatre, or dancing-room, or gaming-house, or masquerade, or any such places, you may turn back as soon as you like, for you have missed your way, unless you have entered such places to sound an alarm, and to cry out to sinners, “The end of these



things is death." You will not see the footsteps of the Saviour there. Ah, no! you have erred from the right path; you are in the wrong road.

Here we are assured that the way of holy, obedient faith is the *safest* way to heaven: "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast go up thereon." O no! the wild beasts of the wilderness-forest may bark, and growl, and bellow, and roar as you pass along; but the snarling dogs are muzzled, the ravening wolves are chained, the ferocious bears are bound, and the roaring lion is tethered, and finds the fences so high that he cannot get over them, and so thick that he cannot get through them: only keep in the middle of the road, and nothing can harm you there, nothing can reach you there: "No lion shall be *there*."

So far as regards the meritorious cause of our admission, there is no way at all, as we have already observed, into the holy of holies, but by the blood of Jesus. "For there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved." The old way to heaven, by the works of the law, was blockaded and shut up by Satan and sin, nearly six thousand years ago; and ever since the fall of Adam, it has been written, in unmistakable characters, on that dispensation, "The glory is departed." "This road is stopped!" "No road to heaven this way!" But when Satan succeeded in closing the old path, Christ opened

a new way to the better country, and no man now cometh unto the Father for grace here, or for glory hereafter, but by him; for he is "the way, the truth, and the life;" and if you go to heaven at all, you must enter "by this new and living way." This book will tell you—

8. *The sure way to gain a goodly heritage.*

"He which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." 2 Cor. ix. 6.

From this infallible guide it appears that the spiritual emigrant, by works of *piety* and *charity* on earth, may increase his happiness in heaven for ever. It teaches you how to send off your goods and chattels before you; pointing out the branch bank of heaven's treasury, into which you may pay your silver and gold, and thus send off remittances to the chancellor of the exchequer of the better country, who will place it to your credit in the ledger of heaven, and on your arrival you will receive both capital and interest, in the currency of the celestial realm: "For he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." It shows that by simply converting his houses, or lands, or any other property, into specie, and paying it into the bank of heaven—one branch of which is the pocket of the necessitous, suffering poor—man may make to himself "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and lay up treasure in

heaven." "This is a kind of bill of exchange, and cannot fail of acceptance but through our own fault," says Quesnel. "The only way to render perishing goods eternal, to secure stately furniture from moths, the richest metals from canker, and precious stones from thieves, is to transmit them to heaven by acts of charity."

If men are wishful to secure full wages from their employers on earth, they know that they must do *full work*, and labor *full time*. Half work and half wages are joined together on earth; and the same arrangement is the law of heaven. Hard work for God secures high wages, and full time in his service a full reward: "Every man shall be rewarded according to his works." If, therefore, you are desirous of securing a large extent of territory—a fine stretch of country, on one of the sunniest banks or in one of the most luxuriant vales of the better land, you must begin early, and labor hard and long, if permitted, in the service of the heavenly King.

Here it may be seen that the Christian's enjoyment in heaven may be increased by the *sacrifices* which he makes for Christ: that whoever sacrifices worldly honors, earthly comforts, and bodily ease and indulgence, for the gospel's sake, "shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." And, in addition to acts of benevolence, exalted personal piety, extensive labor, and self-denials, or sacrifices in the cause of

Christ, the Bible speaks of *suffering* for Christ in the present world as another medium of increasing the extent of our celestial possession in the world to come. For if we suffer with Christ on earth, we are not only to reign with him in heaven, but "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Let us resolve, then, to begin early in the service of the King of glory, and labor assiduously in his vineyard: let us make every proper sacrifice for Christ, endure every appointed suffering, and let us cultivate the spirit of Christian generosity; for "if we sow bountifully, we shall reap also bountifully," and reap in due time, "if we faint not."

How precious are the words of this book of the Lord—the emigrant's guide to the celestial regions! It supplies the lack of a grammar of Canaan's language; it answers the purpose of a splendid map of the better country; it supersedes the necessity of a distinct geography of the glory land: "Search ye out of the book of the Lord, and read." It will make you familiar with the manners and customs of the people of Paradise; it will furnish you with motives for leaving earth, and encouragements to emigrate to heaven; and show you where to find a passport to glory. It tells you the best time to start for the kingdom, directs you in the nearest way to travel, and instructs you how you

may secure a goodly heritage in heaven. It is the charter of your privileges ; it is the ratified covenant of your blessings. It is the pole-star of glory : keep your eye on it. It is your chart by which to navigate the stormy ocean of life ; it is your compass by which to steer your bark through the "course of time" for the "desired haven" of a glorious eternity ; it is the light of heaven to guide your feet into the way of peace ! Read it frequently, search it diligently, and seek to understand it perfectly. Ponder it in your head, hide it in your heart, and exemplify it in your life. Practice it faithfully, cheerfully, constantly. It is the counsel of God to you ; a book of motives, a book of instruction, and a book of life. May its Divine Author guide you with his counsel, and afterward receive you to glory ! Amen.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE NECESSARY PREPARATION.

“What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”—MARK x. 17.

YOU must be CONVERTED before you can inherit the kingdom of heaven. “The heart of the natural man is unholy ; it belongs to the kingdom of Satan : it is full of darkness. Vile affections, like adders, brood there. It is earthly, sensual, devilish ! Hate, deceit, and pride are there. It is a cavern of stormy winds, a troubled sea, a sterile desert. It is a cage of unclean birds : it is the hole of the asp, the cockatrice’s den, and the viper’s nest ; it is a den of thieves, the place of dragons, and the hold of demons. Cries of rebellion fill it :” “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice ?” “It is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” Can such a heart as this enter heaven ? Ah, never ! The unregenerate inherit glory ? God forbid ! He has forbidden it ; he has made it impossible : “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not



enter into the kingdom of God." But, although it is impossible for that uncircumcised Philistine to pass through the portals of Paradise, it is not impossible to convert even that sinner of the deepest degradation into a saint of the highest order. Vile as he is, he may be converted ; vicious as he is, he may be changed ; abandoned as he is, he may be reclaimed ; distant from God as he is, he may be brought nigh ; and heir of hell as he is, he may be brought to heaven after all. But, remember, he must first be made holy : he must be born from above—born of the Spirit of God. This is a subject of such cardinal and vital importance, that we repeat in form what has already been advanced in fact, "Ye must be born again." "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

This is the only credential from the militant Church that will gain us admittance into the sanctified communion of the Church triumphant. The lion must be changed into a lamb, the leopard be turned into a kid, and the vulture converted into a dove. In other words, the irritable and hasty man must be made meek and gentle ; the angry and malicious must become affectionate and kind ; the drunkard and glutton must become sober and temperate ; the liar and the slanderer must be made to love the truth and respect character ; the miser must become benevolent, and the dishonest just ; the haughty must learn respect for their fellow-crea-

tures, and the highminded condescension to men of low estate ; for there must be no tossing up of the head, no consequential airs among the people of the better country ; no hatred, or cruelty ; no falsehood, or dishonesty ; no uncleanness, or any other species of ungodliness there. We are naturally self-willed, and must be *subdued*, and made submissive to God ; we are proud, and must be *humbled* ; we are guilty, and must be *pardoned* ; we are polluted, and must be *purified*, before ever we can hope for heaven ; for the people who live there are holy, and forgiven their iniquity. Assuming that you are anxiously asking, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" we will endeavor to show you more at large what is the necessary preparation for an inheritance in the better land. Observe, then,

1. *You must strip off the filthy garments of sin.*

"There shall in nowise enter into it any thing that defileth." Rev. xxi. 27.

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived : neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God," "except they repent." "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent," before they may hope for a blessed immortality.

However the doctrine of evangelical repentance may be despised, and practically forgotten and neglected, it is the first step in the way to everlasting happiness. Ask the cheerful pilgrims who are returning to Zion with songs, where their enjoyment commenced, and they will refer you to the place where first they felt the "pleasing smart, the meltings of a broken heart." Climb up into heaven, and ask the innumerable company of the redeemed, when their blessedness began? and many will refer you to the time when they watered their couches with tears of contrition, and rose up at midnight to pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner." If therefore you would inherit life, you must "go and do likewise:" you must renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, and "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts." There must be a turning from all forbidden enjoyment. Every sinful connection must, at once and for ever, be broken off. Every sinful pleasure must be relinquished; every sinful practice must be given up; and, in short, every sinful principle must be for ever abandoned. Sin of every kind and of every degree must be regarded with feelings of godly sorrow and practical renunciation. Be it ever so pleasing, ever so precious, ever so profitable, it must be left off. Is it as dear as a right eye? "Pluck it out." Is it useful as a right hand, or convenient as a right foot? "Cut it off:" amputate the offending member: "For it is better for thee to enter

dismembered and halt" into life, than, having two eyes, hands, and feet, to be cast into hell. "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings. Cease to do evil. Learn to do well. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord;" for on no other condition can he inherit glory.

Your old costume will not serve you at the marriage supper of the Lamb; it is too narrow, too short, and too filthy to be seen by Him who cannot look upon sin, or behold iniquity. If it were possible for you to enter heaven without being cleansed from all unrighteousness and sin, you would be cast out of that holy community into outer darkness, because you had not on "the wedding garment." It is in vain to hope for a lot among the blood-washed multitudes in glory, until, like them, you have put off the old man with his deeds: stripped off the filthy rags of unrighteousness in which you served divers sinful lusts; until, having thrown away the old threadbare garments of moral defilement, in which you did the foul and polluting drudgery of the devil, you are attired in the beauties of holiness, and arrayed in that "best robe" of righteousness, which is the adornment prepared for them that repent and believe the gospel: "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie." Nor will

even repentance, alone, however sincere, prepare you for heaven ; for, however you may resolve to forsake sin, that resolution makes no atonement for sin ; though you may have abandoned the practice of sin, its guilt remains uncanceled, and its pollution unwashed away, until you obtain pardon and purification through faith in the blood of Christ.

2. *You must put on the costume of personal holiness.*

“And washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Rev. vii. 14.

PERSONAL HOLINESS is an essential qualification for the spiritual emigrant to the kingdom of heaven. It will be seen by a reference to the place which you will inhabit, the society with which you will mingle, and the employment in which you will be engaged, that before you can inherit glory, you must be eminently HOLY. All holy beings have their citizenship within the portals of the celestial city ; and only holy beings are permitted to dwell there. The dwelling-place of God is a habitation of holiness. The King of the better country is “glorious in holiness.” The native population are perfect in holiness. And the settlers are robed in the beauties of holiness.

If we consult the Old Testament for information on this most important subject, and propose the question, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord ? or who shall stand in his holy place ?” the answer is, “He that



hath clean hands and a pure heart." This was an essential qualification for communion with God for the Old Testament saints, and was their only passport from the kingdom of grace to the regions of glory. If we turn to the New Testament, we are fully assured that without holy dispositions and principles, we cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. We are exhorted therein to be followers of holy men of old, and to have the same mind in us as the holy Jesus: "Perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." It is a fatal delusion to think or speak about entering heaven without resolving to seek and secure a meetness for it; for it is inscribed in express terms, or by implication, on every page of the New Testament, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Do you ask, having repented, "What more shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Here is the answer of God: "BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ;" that is to say, not only give credence to all that the Scriptures say concerning him, but TRUST in his mediatorial work, as the ground of your acceptance with God; RELY on his atonement, as the meritorious cause of your justification, sanctification, and eternal glory; DEPEND on what he hath done and suffered for you; we mean, *instead of you*—as your substitute; and RECEIVE him as the all-sufficient cause of your salvation. View him by FAITH, embodying, in his own person and character, every ex-



cellence of the purest morality, every virtue of the most exalted piety, and every attribute of Deity : believe that such a Christ as this died for you—as really for you as though there had been no other sinner in the world. Approach the throne of grace in his name. Ask forgiveness for Christ's sake. Plead his merits, his person, his character, his offices, his purity, dignity, divinity. Plead his *life* ! Plead his SUFFERINGS ! Plead his DEATH ! Say, Jesus lived for me ! suffered for me ! died for me ! Say, “ He was wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for my iniquities ; ” and thus COMMIT your soul to him by faith. Believe that God the Father forgives you for the sake of his Son ; and he *blots* out your sins as a CLOUD ; not merely cancels them, by running his pen through the records thereof, but pours the ink on, and leaves it on, as a THICK CLOUD ! so that they shall never be read, nor seen, nor remembered against you any more for ever.

Continue believing, and ask for the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, and the “ very God of peace will sanctify you wholly ; ” for thus it is written : “ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” “ The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.” And thus, “ being made free from sin, you will have your fruit unto holiness, and the end

everlasting life." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" saved now! saved to the uttermost! "For he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him!" Believing on him, you shall have life spiritual, life abundantly, and life eternal through his name: for "Whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." Thus renewed in the spirit of your mind; justified by faith, and sanctified by the blood of the everlasting covenant; arrayed in the beauty of evangelical holiness; go on your way rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. And, as you climb the hill of heaven, and approach the great capital of "the better country," you will be recognized at once as one of the children of the royal family, and, amid celestial greetings, you will be accepted through the beloved: "For he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Have you repented? Do you now believe on the Son of God, as described and as you are instructed in the New Testament? If so, you will find the evidence of your meetness for heaven in happy experience and holy living. For observe,

3. *You must practice the manners and customs of the better country.*

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works." Matt. v. 16.

Although you are saved by the unmerited grace of

God, and are “justified freely through the redemption which is in Christ, and not of works, lest any man should boast ;” still, you must be as careful to maintain good works—the necessary fruit of justifying faith—as though you had to be saved by works, and not by faith. Faith justifies the soul before God, and good works justify faith, and prove it to be of the operation of God ; for by works faith is made perfect. Whatever profession you may make of faith in Christ, unless it be evinced by corresponding works, it is not a saving faith. It is as impossible for you to get to heaven without practical godliness, as it is for you to be justified by the works of the law.

Let us illustrate our position by a very simple figure : “Suppose a man in a boat, in which are two oars : he calls one of these faith, and the other good works. See, now, how vainly he strives to reach the desired haven by using either of these alone. He first puts out the oar of faith over the side of the boat, and begins pulling away with all his might ; but the boat goes only round and round, instead of darting ahead at every stroke. He now takes in that oar, and tries the oar of good works over the other side of the boat ; but the only difference is, it now goes round in the opposite direction. At last, he plies them both together, faith on one side, and good works on the other ; and the consequence is, the boat neither turns to leeward nor

windward, but goes straight ahead to the place of destination." And, in like manner, faith and good works are necessary to your eternal salvation; for "faith without works is dead, being alone;" therefore, "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

This is what we mean by saying that you must live in the constant practice of the manners and customs of the people of the celestial regions: you must abound in all holy conversation and godliness, exemplifying all the fruits of the Spirit, which are these—love, joy, and peace, filling the inmost soul—here are the internal evidences of man's acceptance with God—and long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance, faith—these are the external signs by which all may take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus, and is on his journey to a better land. This is the travelling dress of the spiritual emigrant to the better country; the costume in which the new creature is to appear on earth, and in which he will enter heaven. Being "clothed with humility," arrayed in "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," wearing the "wedding garment" of salvation, with a heart full of love, and a life full of good works, seek to go up and possess the good land—"go on unto perfection," living in the enjoyment of every Christian privilege, patiently endur-

ing every Christian trial, and faithfully performing every Christian duty.

No longer lusting after the flesh-pots of Egypt, at once accustom yourself to the diet of your Father's table, by feasting on the fatness of his house, and drinking at the rivers of his pleasures. Mingling with his people in the habitation of his house, learn how to adore him in the place where his honor dwelleth ; and thus you will become familiar with the practices and principles of the people of the better country whither you go. In a word, endeavor constantly to live in a state of intimate fellowship with God : commune with him, seek to walk with him and talk with him, rejoicing in his favor, and reflecting his image. In this sense seek for higher and still higher degrees of Christian perfection, "that ye may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." For, although you are now a child of God, if you have, as we assume, sincerely repented and believed on Christ to the saving of your soul, yet it is your privilege to grow in grace, from the state of spiritual childhood, until you become a young man in Christ, and a father in Israel : "Growing up into him who is the head, even Christ, in all things, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."



Though you now have real religion, you may have more and more. You may add to, ascend higher, travel farther, sink deeper, go beyond, go on unto perfection. You may be still more perfect, may wax stronger and stronger, may proceed from grace to grace, and be changed from glory into glory, until at length you will pass from the glory of the Church militant to the glory of the Church triumphant.

It is not only your high and glorious privilege to go up and possess the good land when you leave this present evil world, but to know during your pilgrimage that you are going thither: For "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The venerable and apostolic Clowes was so conscious of his acceptance with God, and enjoyed such an abiding sense of the witness of the Spirit, that he could say, "I have never had a doubt for forty years;" and it is your privilege also to be sealed unto the day of redemption.

And now we would ask you, dear reader, have you obtained the meetness for heaven, of which we have spoken? Have you firmly resolved to set out for the better land? Are you travelling in company with such as are bound for the kingdom? Have you sincerely repented? Do you firmly believe in Christ? Are you converted to God? Are you holy, and, as a proof of it, do you abound in good works? Are you



living in the constant practice of the tempers and actions of the holy people of the better country? If you have the witness of the Spirit of God to testify that you are an heir of glory, then be careful to keep it. Hold fast, endure hardness, and let nothing separate you from the love of Christ! But if you still lack the scriptural evidence of a change of heart, O! be persuaded to repent and come to Jesus now. Everlasting glory, or endless perdition, may be the consequence of your decision while you read these lines! Pause, then, immortal spirit! Stop, poor sinner! Think, O man, hasting to an eternal world, and at its threshold, Whence came I? whither do I go? and where shall I find my final destiny? Turn from sin this moment. Behold the Lamb of God. Believe on Christ and be saved now. Do these things, and thou shalt inherit eternal life.

Say, then, at once, "I am bound for the kingdom." Secure your place in the gospel chariot. See to your registration. Get insured, and be in earnest to "escape for your life." Do not expect to gain heaven by halves and piecemeal, but resolve at once to be a decided Christian. Say with your lips, say in your heart, say by your life, and say now, "I will go," through clouds or sunshine, through storms or calms, through thunders and lightnings, or bright seasons and scenes. Say, "My heart is fixed, O God! my heart is fixed," to

have Christ, and holiness, and heaven, for my portion. Say it once and again, Though the way be rough, and the weather be foul, and the journey be long—heaven for me: through good report, and evil report, through honor and dishonor, “*I will* go in the strength of the Lord God.” Amen.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE PLEASANT JOURNEY.

“Her ways are ways of pleasantness.”—PROV. iii. 17.

It is by no means our intention to make the impression on your mind that, if you embrace the religion of Jesus Christ, you will meet with no trial or conflict in the way to heaven; though the Christian can not only smile in the sunshine, but he also can sing in the shade. “We glory in tribulations also.” But we hope it will be seen, by a perusal of the following pages, that Christianity indemnifies its possessor for all his losses, gives to him an equivalent for all his sacrifices, secures to him a reward for all his sufferings, and, on the whole, makes him happier during this life in the practice of holiness, than he would have been in the enjoyment of the pleasures of sin. Having shown you the necessary preparation to be made by the spiritual emigrant, we now invite your attention to the pleasant journey to the better land. Of course it will be understood that we speak of a religious life under the figure

of a journey, when we say, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness." Observe,

1. *Its perfect safety.*

"Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" 1 Pet. iii. 13.

Religion is perfectly safe for all classes of society : safe for the individual possessing it ; and for all with whom he is associated in social or secular life. It makes no cruel husbands or angry wives. It does not make children less dutiful, or parents less kind. It makes no hard masters, or unfaithful servants ; but just the contrary. However amiable a man may be in the various stations and offices of social and active life, religion will make him still more agreeable : "For the righteous" (other circumstances being equal) "is more excellent than his neighbor." It is the best protection to person, character, and property—requiring that men should do unto others as they would, in a change of circumstances, that others should do unto them. It suspends the blow of the assassin, shuts the mouth of slander, and sometimes catches thieves who have escaped the detection of the most vigilant police. "O that pig !" said a villager, in the neighborhood of Leeds, when he was seeking for pardon, and could not believe to the saving of his soul. "What pig ?" said the minister, who was present on the occasion ; when the man confessed that he had in his possession an animal that

he had stolen. And it was not until he had solemnly promised to make restitution, that religion allowed him to pass through the strait gate.

What we chiefly intend, however, is this—there is no danger to the individual possessing religion ; nothing injurious to the body, or degrading to the mind. Insisting, as it does, on industry, economy, and sobriety, it naturally tends to make life long and happy : “yielding riches and honor,” to fill man’s treasures, and deck his brow. There is no risk, in a spiritual sense. It is the safe side of the question at issue between Christianity and infidelity. You cannot be wrong if you are on “the Lord’s side.” It will never plant a thorn in your dying-pillow, nor harden the bed of death, nor darken the day of judgment, nor shed a gloom over your everlasting destiny, to think, I have been temperate, industrious, economical, benevolent ; have loved God and my neighbor ; have repented of sin, and believed on Christ. Nay, but such reflections will make all your bed in your sickness ; such influences will extract the poison from the barbed arrow of the king of terrors ; such experience will secure your acquittal at the last judgment ; such grace will escort you from judgment to glory, and be the theme of your song in heaven for ever.

## 2. *Its light expenses.*

“What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly,

to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah vi. 8.

Here is the refutation of that species of infidelity which complains about the travelling expenses in the way to heaven. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath." Religion is not an expensive thing; even Satan himself considered it to be worth more than it cost: "Doth Job serve God for naught?" Speaking in a literal and secular sense, it is cheaper to serve God than Satan, and will cost you less to go to heaven than to hell. Granted, that if you are a New Testament saint, you must contribute of your earthly substance as the services of the Church may require, and as your abilities will allow; but you must not forget, that what is laid out in the cause of religion is generally first saved from the service of sin. And, if you compare the notes of Christian expenditure with the tavern scores, theatrical expenses, and with the extravagances in diet and dress of the men of the world, perhaps you will be convinced that the secular claims of Christ are less than those of Belial. You can occupy the chief seat in the sanctuaries of Christ for two and sixpence, and often less, for a quarter of a year; while, in theatres and operas, these synagogues of Satan, the sittings are often let for half a crown a night. "Previous to my conversion," said a man in the neighborhood of Keighley, to the late Rev. W. Taylor, "I sold my



Bible for ale, and pawned 'Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament' for strong drink ; and in the space of nine years I was sold up seven times. Now I am comfortable and happy, and have money in the bank."

It is a serious mistake to reckon every thing lost that goes out of our sight in the shape of contribution to the cause of religion. "We have lost a great deal by religion, haven't we, Thomas?" said the wife of an old Christian, in London, to her husband, when requested to contribute to a Christian institution. "Yes, Mary," said Thomas ; "before we got religion, you had got a washing-tray, in which you washed for hire ; but since we got religion, you have lost your wash-tray. And you had a gown and a bonnet much the worse for wear, though they were all you had to wear ; and you have lost them a long time ago. I have lost a deal by my religion. I had got a water-pail, in which I carried water ; and that, you know, I have lost many years ago. And then I had an old slouching hat, a tattered coat, and mended shoes and stockings ; but I have lost them also, long ago. And, Mary, you know I had a habit of getting drunk, poor as I was, and of quarrelling with you ; and that, you know, I have lost. And then I had a burdened conscience, and a wicked heart, and ten thousand guilty fears ; but all are lost, completely lost. And I could even wish that you had been as great a loser as myself, for what we lose by religion will be our

everlasting gain." Few people, indeed, have lost any thing by religion, but poverty and rags, and guilt and misery; for "godliness, with contentment, is great gain."

Figuratively speaking, religion is not expensive: "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." It is nothing new for men to consider the claims of religion to be of the most repulsive and exorbitant kind: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?" said one of old time. "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" No, nothing of the kind; the Almighty hath not required these things at thy hands. The religion of Christ demands no costly sacrifices or bloody offerings; no repulsive services, austerities, and tortures: "He hath showed thee, O man! what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Such, indeed, are the incalculable blessings which are laid up for them that love God, that, if you had to travel over the icy mountains of Greenland to find them, or to toil through the burning deserts of Arabia to obtain them, or to wade through floods of sorrow, or sail over seas of suffering, or pass through flames of mar-

tyrdom to secure and enjoy them ; yea, if you had to weep, and groan, and suffer every step in the way to the kingdom of heaven, you would be worse than a madman not to go up at once to possess the land ; for even then it would be worth ten thousand times more than ever it had cost. But the very reverse of these things is true ; for in becoming a Christian, you will have nothing to sacrifice but that which is evil to yourself, injurious to your neighbor, or dishonoring to God. You will have nothing to do in the way to heaven but what will yield you an ample reward in this life, and greater recompense in the life to come ; and you will have nothing to suffer that will not “work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

3. *Its immense remunerations.*

“Having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Christianity is profitable for both worlds. She is an angel of mercy, with both hands full of the best blessings of Providence, for those who are the subjects of her saving grace : “Length of days are in her right hand ; and in her left hand, riches and honor.” “I am glad to see thee with such a warm covering this cold morning,” said a gentleman to a man who had been accustomed to appear covered with rags. “It was not always thus,” the man replied : “I once was a poor miserable creature, and had neither good clothes nor good

victuals: now I have both, and a hundred pounds in the bank!" "What has produced this favorable change?" continued the gentleman. "Religion, sir. It made me industrious and sober. Nothing, now, went for sin; and the result is, I am comfortable, and comparatively rich."

But what is still more important is this: it leads men to the possession of "the true riches"—spiritual riches, that never prove a snare, that never drown men in destruction and perdition, that never perish with using, or "make to themselves wings and flee away." How profitless are railway speculations, banking revenues, and journeys to the gold regions of California or the diggings of Australia, when compared with the everlasting gains of godliness! It leads the spiritual emigrant to regions of gold without digging, without ore—gold already pure—fine gold, purified seven times: it rewards him with riches of grace here, and of glory hereafter: "Having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

4. *Its glorious liberty.*

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."  
Rom. xiv. 5.

Christianity is the most reasonable thing in the world. It accomplishes its work of regenerating the heart and reforming the life of man in such a way as to pay the utmost deference to him as a rational being. It treats him as a being capable of high attainments and glorious

destiny. It never coerces mankind to adopt its principles. It knows nothing of physical force ; its work is performed, “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” It *warns* him of his danger : “Stop, poor sinner!” True, it thunders in his ears this once, but only to tell him he is in the wrong road. It lightens, only to show him that there is but a step between him and death. It *invites* his attention : “Come now, and let us reason together.” It reminds him of his former condition, his illustrious origin, his native country, and his Father’s house. It *expostulates* with him—shows him the folly and madness of rebellion against God. It instructs, enlightens, and convinces him ; it woos, entreats, and beseeches him to repent. It *supplies* him with *motives* to penitence—speaks to him of the love of Christ, and tells him of a God ready to pardon. It furnishes *grace* to soften, to subdue, and conquer his rebel heart ; and having won and inclined him to repent and believe the gospel, it removes his guilt, and terminates his misery. And thus, you perceive, religion only humbles man in order to exalt him : it abases only to honor, it impoverishes only to enrich, it wounds only to heal, and kills only to make alive.

There is nothing unreasonable in the requirements of religion. Having laid down its great ruling principles of love to God and our neighbor for the government of our conduct, then, in all matters of minor importance,



it leaves every man to choose for himself, and be fully persuaded in his own mind. It requires him to be a member of the Christian Church, but leaves him to choose the denomination for himself. He may call himself a Churchman or a Dissenter, a Methodist or a Congregationalist, as he likes best, if he only be a Christian. It requires that the traveller to Zion should appear in modest apparel, but it neither enjoins "broad brims" nor condemns "turbans." While it gives no more countenance to the rich, with his coat of superfine, than to the poor man in his fustian dress, it rejoices over both to do them good. It is of too Divine an origin to notice whether men are walking in the way to heaven in clog-shoes or silver slippers, if their hearts are only right with God. It is of too high birth and of too noble extraction to make distinctions between such as are clad with costly apparel, and others who are kept from the cold by their plain linsey-woolsey garments, provided they are equally adorned with the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which, in the sight of God, is of great price."

It of course prescribes bounds to men's appetites and passions, but it never prohibits until further indulgence would prove fatal either to body or mind. It leaves every man to furnish the supply for his own table. He is welcome to his haunch of venison, or he may have the blessing of God on his oatmeal porridge, providing



always that "whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we do all to the glory of God." The same may be said of his occupation : he must be industrious, and fill some useful station in life ; but he may choose for himself whether he cultivate fields or navigate floods : he may sit at the loom, or stand at the stall ; he may produce as a manufacturer, or speculate as a merchant ; he may labor at the bench, or wait behind the counter, providing that "while diligent in business, he is fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," and hasting away on his journey to heaven.

5. *Its easy accomplishment.*

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. xi. 30.

The religion of Christ may be practiced by all men, whatever their circumstances may be. It is adapted to meet the circumstances and supply the spiritual wants of universal man. It is equally suited to the infant of days, and the hoary-headed sire of four-score years. The youth with the bloom of May on his cheek, and the man of maturer age, may perform the journey to the better country. Religion was designed for the Jew, and it just meets the case of the Gentile ; while the wandering Asiatic, the groaning African, the wild American, and the polite European, are alike welcome to its benefits. It knows no distinction as to caste or color : "For there is no respect of persons with God."

It is perfectly adapted to all places, home or abroad ; and to all climates, hot or cold, extreme or temperate. It is alike suited to every zone, torrid or frigid, for it has fires that can warm the heart of the Greenlander, frozen to his iceberg ; and waters that can refresh the Arabian, while he faints beneath the heat of a vertical sun. The Indian may start from his woods on his journey to heaven ; and the Highlander set out from his rocks ; the citizen may commence from his counter, and the professional man from his office ; and the pauper may step from his dunghill, and the prince from his throne, into the way for the kingdom.

Religion is adapted to man in all circumstances. It can enrich the poor, and induce the rich to give up all for Christ. It suits the man with a tattered garment, and serves the peer in his purple robe. It can save on the bright mount of prosperity, and sanctify afflictions in the dark vale of adversity. It has health for man in sickness, and life for him in death.

It has no objection to the advancement of science, and it is friendly to every useful art. Men may erect houses of the first style of architecture, and build ships after the best models : they may cut canals, and construct railways, and drive their iron-horses, and locomotive chariots, from the Land's End, in Cornwall, to John O'Groat's, in Scotland, and feel the love of God shed abroad in their hearts. They may set up their

telegraphs, travel by steam, paint with sunbeams, and speak by lightning: religion opposes none of these things.

The agriculturist may till his lands, and sow his fields, reap his crops, and shout his "harvest home;" the manufacturer may sit at the loom, or sweat at the forge; the merchant may buy in the market, and the tradesman may sell in his shop; every man may pursue his lawful calling, and find on earth his way to heaven.

The mariner may navigate his oceans, plough his seas, and visit his ports: religion will teach him how to steer his bark over the ocean of life, how to set his sails, and calculate his latitude and longitude, so as safely to reach the blest shore,

"Where all the ship's company meet  
Who sailed with the Saviour beneath."

The geographer may traverse his maps, count his populations, and measure his distances; he may mark his localities, and find the altitude of his mountains, the depth of his oceans, the length of his rivers, and breadth of his continents: religion will help rather than hinder him, and will teach him the geography of a better land than this.

The astronomer may take his optical instruments, and soar on the wings of science to the sidereal heavens, to measure the dimensions of suns, to mark the revolu-

tions of moons, and adjust the stars in their orbits: he will find Christianity to be an agreeable companion, steadying his aërial car as he ascends, and guiding him as he wanders about among the stars of God, and roves over creation from world to world; and having attended him as an intelligent consort to the loftiest point of observation, it will point him to regions beyond, and discover to him stars, and suns, and skies that he has never seen before—we mean the Star of Jacob, the Sun of righteousness, and the cloudless sky of the better country. In short, a man may be a diligent and successful student in history, geology, geography, and astronomy, and in every branch of philosophy; he may be an expert practitioner in law, or physic; a professor in science, and a master in art; and yet journey rejoicing to the better land.

6. *Its constant peacefulness.*

“All her paths are peace.” Prov. iii. 17.

The religion of Christ is the harbinger of peace to the believing soul:

“Sweet peace she brings wherever she arrives  
She builds our quiet, as she forms our lives,  
Lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,  
And opens in the breast a little heaven.”

It is true the Christian has his trials in life, but it is equally true that all things work together for his good; and hence, succored by grace, “we glory in tribulations

also." Health is a blessing ; sickness is sanctified ; to live is Christ, to die is gain ; to remain here a while and suffer for Christ is good ; but to depart hence, "and be with Christ," to be crowned and reign with him, "is far better." However the spiritual traveller through this desert may be troubled without, he may have peace within. Peace is bequeathed to us by our Saviour : "Peace I leave with you : " it is his legacy to his disciples : "My peace I give unto you." The very least that can be said of religion is this, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

It secures peace of *conscience*, and silences its guilty clamors by shedding the pardoning love of God abroad in the penitent believer's heart. It stills the tempest of angry, turbulent, and sinful passions, by implanting in the soul of the believer the principle of "holiness ;" and the consequence is "PEACE through believing." The voice of this tempest-stiller is "*Peace, be still !*" and at this the storm subsides, and the soul of the sinner saved by grace is filled with the holy calm of heaven.

It is a state of peace with *God*. Previous to this divine change wrought in the sinner's heart, "clouds and darkness were round about Jehovah ;" the moral heavens were lowering, the elements were agitated, blackness and darkness filled the firmament ; the storms of wrath raged ; tempests of indignation threatened ;



the curse of the broken law rumbled ; the thunders of God pealed ; his lightnings flashed ; he was angry with the wicked every day ; there was “ a fearful looking for of judgment.” But when the sinner took refuge in Him who is the “ hiding-place from the wind, and covert from the tempest : ” when he repented, fled for shelter from the hail and the rain to the cross, and believed on Christ with his heart unto righteousness, then the storm abated ; then the tempest was hushed ; the curse of the law ceased to rumble, and the thunders to peal, and the lightnings to flash ! The clouds broke then, and the shadows fled away ! And when the heavens brightened, and God smiled from his holy habitation, and spake from his mercy-seat, “ Thy sins be forgiven thee : go in PEACE ! ” then there was a great CALM ! “ Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “ Peace,” saith the Saviour to his disciples, as they follow him through the desert to the Paradise of God, “ peace be unto you ”—great peace, perfect peace, peace that passeth all understanding : “ All her paths are peace.”

7. *Its general cheerfulness.*

“ And the ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs.” Isa. xxxv. 10.

Religion is not a mere negative principle, saving its possessor from distress and torment only, but it supplies him with abundance of actual and positive enjoyment.



It not only saves man from troublesome fears, but it inspires him with hopes, good, blessed, lively, glorious hopes, full of immortality and eternal life: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul." "We are saved by hope." The Christian's hope never fails: it is the anchor that holds his vessel until he has weathered the storm, and gives buoyancy to his bark amid the surges of the mountain waves, and keeps his ark afloat amid its pitchings and rollings, and tossings to and fro, on this life's tumultuous sea. It is the life-boat in which he escapes from the general wreck; and is like a cork on the waters: no agitations, no convulsions, no storms can sink it: "We are saved by hope"—sweet hope, the hope of the gospel of Christ. And besides this good hope through grace, there is strong consolation for the spiritual emigrant to the better land. It is not sufficient to say that there is great peace and bright hope for the Christian pilgrim; there is more than this for him: there is exalted pleasure; there is gladness and joy for him—joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Poor Cambo, the negro, referring to the time when he was under conviction for sin, said, "Sun shine sorry, birds sing sorry, land look sorry, but poor Cambo sorrier than them all. Then me cry out, 'Mercy, mercy, Lord, on poor Cambo.' By-and-by, water come in my eyes, and glad come in my heart. Then sun look glad, woods look glad, land look glad, but poor Cambo gladder than them all." And

such are the legitimate fruits of religion, as we journey through the wilderness : “ Returning to Zion with songs, we obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away.”

It is the day of mercy and goodness to us, that turns our feet into the way of God’s testimonies. It is the year of our redemption, that starts us for the promised land. It is the period of our greatest blessedness on earth, when we are emancipated from the thralldom of sin, and blessed with the liberty of the children of God. Would to God that our holy, peaceful, and pleasant Christianity were separated from the tedious pilgrimages and painful penances of the gloomy and superstitious ; from the will-worships and voluntary humilities of legalists, the wild ravings of fanatics, the cold sentimentalism of formalists, and from all the irksome and worthless forms and ceremonies that have been imported into it from the beginning by misguided professors. O how lovely it appears, as we see it springing up out of the New Testament, just as it came from Jesus Christ and his apostles ! “ Looking forth as the morning ! fair as the moon, and clear as the sun ;” for it came to us in the beginning with hallelujah choruses, and passed through the world singing, “ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward men !” This is the religion of the Bible. It has jubilant influences and glorious liberty for man. It has great peace,

and bright hopes, and joy unspeakable, and pleasures for evermore, for him. Christianity is not a system of servility, is not a superstitious round of austerities and torture—a burden intolerable to be borne—nor a grievous tax on human enjoyment :

“Religion never was designed  
To make our pleasures less :  
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,  
And all her paths are peace.”

We speak from experience, we speak on the testimony of others, and on the authority of the word of God : “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

For twenty-four years, the author of this book sought for pleasure in unrighteousness, but found it not. He sought it in the sequestered village—it was not there ; and in the crowded city—but it was not there. He sought it in vain in the practice of sin : it was not there. He knew not where to find real happiness until he went into the sanctuary of God—to the feet of Jesus, and embraced religion ! O, it was *there* ; yes, it was *there*—at the throne of grace, in the love of Christ : he found it *THERE* ! And after the lapse of nearly twenty years in the service of God, he can say from experience that it is no weariness to serve the Lord ; that his “commandments are not grievous ;” but that “his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.”

We speak from the testimony of others, of Christians of every age and name, who have tried religion ; from the new convert who has just tasted of the good word of God, to the hoary pilgrim who has felt the powers of the world to come for threescore years. *There*, says the child of God who was born of the Spirit only a moment before, " O, how happy I feel ! I wish I had believed sooner." *Yonder* is a venerable and patriarchal saint who has walked with God for more than half a century ; see how he leans on the top of his staff, and shakes his hoary locks for joy as he approaches the borders of the better land ! Hark ! how he sings of the pleasantness of piety :

"O happy day that fixed my choice,  
On thee, my Saviour and my God ;  
That bade my bounding heart rejoice,  
And tell its raptures all abroad."

It is remarkable that, however Christians differ on other subjects, they almost universally agree on this—the pleasantness of religion. Old men and maidens, young men and children, say *it is so*. The rich and the poor, the master and the servant, the manufacturer and the merchant, the soldier and the sailor, the philosopher and the hero, the peasant and the peer, the pauper and the prince, say *it is so*. The learned, the illiterate, the Australians, the New Zealanders, the South Sea Islanders, the Chinese, the Asiatics, the Africans, the Americans, and the Europeans, say *IT IS SO*. All who have

tasted the true spirit of Christianity, whether they be ministers or members in the Church, babes in Christ, or fathers or mothers in Israel; or whether they be Episcopalians or Presbyterians, Conformists or Dissenters, Methodists, Baptists, or Independents, they confirm the testimony of each other, and say, It is so! The healthy and the sick, the living and the dying say, It is so: her ways are ways of pleasantness.

And if they who *professed* religion had not proved it to be a source of happiness in this life, yet still it would be so to such as *possessed* it: for thus saith the Lord—of the wilderness journey from earth to heaven—"Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

If the reader has already obtained joy and peace through believing, we exhort him to continue in well-doing, to "walk by the same rule, and to mind the same thing." Living in the enjoyment of an enlightened and cheerful piety yourself, seek to bring others into the possession of like precious faith; and, filled with peace and hope, "go on your way rejoicing." And if you still belong to the class of mortals who, being strangers to the pleasures of religion, are ever asking, "Who will show us any good?" we most cordially invite you to commence the journey to the better land: "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee"—the good of providence, the

good of grace, and the good of glory. Religion is good for the body, and good for the soul. It is good for individuals, and good for society. It is good for the young and the aged; good for the rich and the poor. It is good in health, better in sickness, and best of all in a dying-hour. It is only good! it is always good! it is supremely good! it is eternally good! "O taste, and see that the Lord is gracious;" for "happy is the man that findeth wisdom." "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Amen.



## CHAPTER X.

## THE FINAL DEPARTURE.

“The time of my departure is at hand.”—2 TIM. iv. 6.

WE have already witnessed the departure of the Christian emigrant out of spiritual Egypt, and followed him in his wilderness journey toward the celestial Canaan; and, as he is just about to cross over the river that rolls betwixt the desert and the Paradise of God, let us contemplate his final departure to the promised land. Observe we,

1. *It is frequently affecting.*

“By faith, Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph.” Heb. xi. 21.

There is much in dying circumstances that is common to all who are mortal; and there are peculiar influences, arising from special relationships in life, which may alike affect the saint and the sinner in their departure into the world of disembodied spirits. Like all who are mortal, the Christian emigrant may be afflicted with strong corporeal pain: he may heave with convulsions,

or sink under the influence of extreme prostration and sickness ; his physical nature may labor for life until the damps of death bedew his cheeks ; he may agonize and groan when his heart-strings break and his flesh fails ; and, in respect of his body, may die as other mortals die, because these are influences that affect him, not as a Christian, but as a mortal man.

As a relation in the family, as a citizen in this world, or as a member of the Church, he may feel exquisitely when the silver cord of affection is loosened, and be the subject of strange emotion when the golden bond of familiar friendship and brotherhood is broken, and when he must leave those behind who have been with him in all his tribulations. As a parent, he may feel it a keen stroke that severs him from an obedient, affectionate, and beloved family of children, endeared to him by a thousand ties of flesh and blood ; endeared by the price which they have actually cost him—a thousand anxieties and fears, a thousand toils and cares, a thousand reproofs and prayers, and a thousand smiles and tears. The same may be said of any other member of the social circle during life's last hour : the parting period, the farewell feeling, the final adieu, and the last lingering look, may excite the tenderest sympathies of the human heart, and fill the departing soul with such exquisite emotion as language fails to express.

The emigrant and the transport have the same ocean

to cross ; and, to human appearance, there is but little difference in their feelings, as developed in external signs : each of them may be suffused in tears, and overwhelmed with the strange emotions of the parting hour ; but the principles on which they are departing are widely different : the convict is *driven* away, while the emigrant *desires* to go. And although, as a mortal and social companion, the Christian *emigrant* to a future state may evince external signs of feeling similar to the spiritual *transport*, who is driven away in his wickedness, there is this important difference : to the former it is the *end* ; but, to the latter, the *beginning* of sorrows.

It is by no means creditable to infidelity, that some of its advocates have left the world in worse than brutal insensibility : hence the lines, said to have been written by Lord Byron in his dying moments,

“Man and the world so much I hate,  
I care not when I quit the scene.”

How sadly a scene like this contrasts with the tender regards, the warm affections, the gushing springs, and throbbing sensibilities of Christianity, in a dying-hour ! When the Rev. Samuel Atterby was leaving the world, he turned to say to his friends : “Meet me in heaven : I shall be looking out to welcome you to the happy shore.” “Shortly after this,” says his biographer, “he requested to be left alone with his daughter, an only child, when,

pressing her to his heart, he said, 'How shall I give thee up, my first-born, the child of my vows and prayers, and tears,—the object that first called forth in my soul the feelings of parental love and care? I commit thee into the hands of God : live to his glory : we shall soon meet again.'” “Stretching out his hand to his family, who were around his dying-bed, the Rev. W. Day said, ‘O Lord, bless these dear ones : thou wilt not forsake them, thou wilt never leave them.’” Such as these are the true seed of Israel ; they are the legitimate children of Jacob, who, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph, and worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff. How affecting, and yet how interesting and sublime the scene, when the Christian emigrant, standing on the threshold of heaven, looks back to bless his family, and beckon them after him to the promised land. “Let me die the death of the righteous.”

2. *It is invariably satisfactory.*

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” 2 Tim. iv. 7.

We have noticed the Christian emigrant's departure simply and only, hitherto, as a mere mortal, and as a member of social society : we shall now lose sight of all the influences that affect him as such, and contemplate his departure only in reference to his feelings as a Christian. And here, we observe, that he leaves the world completely satisfied with religion. It is literally

true, in all cases, that a life spent in the service of God is never regretted, when the heart and the flesh fail. You have seen "the chamber where the good man meets his fate;" you have conversed with men who have been familiar with dying scenes; you have read obituaries, memoirs, and biography of every species, it may be: we ask you, did you ever hear a man regret, at the close of life, that he had set out for heaven at an early period? Did you ever read of one who on a dying-bed repented that he had become a Christian? We believe you never did.

Now if ever man had reason to repent having set out for heaven, it would be likely to be the one who had suffered the greatest persecutions by the way; and, perhaps, no one ever suffered more for righteousness' sake than Paul the apostle. He was "in labors abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, and in deaths oft." He suffered a martyrdom of torture for thirty-four years. He lived in perpetual suspense, in jeopardy every hour, and was not only accounted as a sheep for the slaughter, but "killed all the day long." And yet, as he stood on the margin of the martyr's grave, and took a retrospective view of the thirty-four years which he had spent in fighting with beasts at Ephesus, and elsewhere, and in buffeting with adverse elements in his journey "o'er earth's wild way," so far from feeling regret for the past, he gave utterance to

the language of complete satisfaction : " I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." He might have said, " I have let human honor go, and this world's wealth go, and ease and health go ; I am just on the point of letting life itself go ; but I am determined not to let religion go ! All else may go ; but it will be Paul's glory to say when leaving earth, and to sing when entering heaven, ' I have kept the faith ! ' " " Are you sorry," said missionary Williams to a dying heathen chief who had embraced Christianity, " that you cast away your lying gods ? " Tears of pleasure sparkled in his eyes while he exclaimed, " No, no. What ! can I be sorry for casting away death for life ? " " Are you afraid to die ? " " No, no," he replied, " the canoe is on the sea ; the sails are spread : she is ready for the gale. I have a good Pilot to guide me, and a good haven to receive me." " Let my last end be like his."

3. *It is universally hopeful.*

" The righteous hath hope in his death." Prov. xiv. 32.

The departing emigrant to a better country has nothing to fear when he is called to cross over the swellings of Jordan : " Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil ; for thou art with me : thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." Death to a Christian is no longer an enemy : he comes



only to do the work of a friend. It is the friendly influence that frees the imprisoned soul from its cumbrous clay, that lets it loose from earth to take its flight to heaven. "To die is gain"—immediate, unspeakable, everlasting gain. To him it is falling asleep, sinking to rest, changing his residence, leaving the wilderness for Canaan. It is not that gloomy valley that it once appeared to be. There is light at evening-tide. There is glory and brightness in the passage. It is the way to better life. It is the subterraneous road to bliss to the believer on the Son of God: "He that liveth and believeth on him shall never die." He shall be changed, he shall leave the world, and depart hence and go home, but he shall never die. Death to him is vanquished—conquered. He lives an everlasting life in death!

The grave to him is a sanctified bed, an asylum of safety, a sanctuary of quiet repose: "The wicked cease from troubling" there, "and the weary are at rest." It is a convenient lodging-place: the Saviour has slept in it, and made it easy for the reception of the bodies of his way-worn saints. They sleep sweetly and soundly in the place where the Lord lay, after their day of toil: here they enjoy in the best sense of the word, "Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep;" and from hence they shall arise, refreshed with their slumbers, in all the vigor of immortal youth and everlasting life. For, although the spiritual emigrant to the better land must

pass through the grave, he will not be lost in it, nor left in it ; for He who is " the resurrection and the life " will come and inquire for the dust of his followers, and " raise them up at the last day." He is only to lodge in the dust during the Saturday evening of life, until the bright day of everlasting Sabbath dawns, when he shall shake off his slumbers, and issue from the repose of the tomb with strength renewed, arrayed in his Sabbath dress—the changeless costume of a glorious immortality. He will be all the better in the morning for his sleep in the house appointed for all living, during the night ; for he will fall asleep in weakness, and wake up in power : he will go into the grave a natural, and come out of it a spiritual body : he will retire in dishonor, and come forth in glory : he will lie down in corruption, but he will rise up in incorruption ; for " this mortal shall put on immortality," and " mortality shall be swallowed up of life !"

And if death and the grave were a thousand times more formidable than observation of Scripture permits us to believe them to be, there would be hope in the death of the righteous ; because infinite might is pledged to assist him : " Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end," saith the Lord. " His God sustains him in a dying-hour : his dying-hour brings glory to his God." " My flesh and my heart faileth me," said the pilgrim saint of olden times, " but God is the strength of my heart,

and my portion for ever." But perhaps you will say, Is there no cause to fear that the Lord will forsake him? No, not the slightest: "Who ever trusted in him, and was confounded?" Who ever served God, and was deserted and cast off by his Master when his strength failed? Where did he live? when did he die? and what is that Christian's name who was abandoned by Christ in a dying-hour? Jesus forsake him! forget him! neglect him! It is impossible; it cannot be. Human friendship may fail in its sympathies: the father may possibly desert his son or his daughter; even a "woman may forget her sucking child," and fail to compassionate the son of her womb; nature may forget her wonted operations, the sun may forget to rise and set, the ocean may forget to ebb and flow; but Christ never fails, never deserts, never forgets! No, the order of creation may be inverted, the earth may be moved, the heavens may pass away, the hills may depart, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; "But my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee, saith the Lord, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed." No, "I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee:" "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One

of Israel, thy Saviour." Fear not, therefore, departing Christian : "For I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

The Christian believer is saved by hope in his final departure. When good old Bishop Beveridge was dying, he did not know his most familiar friends ; he did not remember that he had any children. When Mrs. Beveridge stood by his bedside, he was asked if he knew her ; but he replied no, he did not know her. A fellow-traveller to Zion, who was present, said to him, "Do you know Jesus Christ, Bishop Beveridge?" The departing saint was sensitive only here ; it seemed as though a charm had passed over him at the sound of that name : raising himself up, he said, "Yes, I know Jesus Christ : he is my Saviour. I have known him these forty years : all my hope is in him." The Rev. Mr. Hyatt was accustomed to say in his happiest moments in the pulpit, "If I had a thousand souls, I could cast them all on the atonement of Christ." He was asked by a colleague in the ministry who witnessed his departure, if he could then cast a thousand souls on the precious blood of Jesus ? when, gathering up all his strength to express his confidence in Christ, he said, "A million ! a million ! a million !"

4. *It is generally peaceful.*

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace." Ps. xxxvii. 37.

However the Christian emigrant may have had to suffer in the way through the wilderness, "the end of that man is peace." Though the process may have been painful, the result is happy: "Night-dews fall not more gently, nor weary, worn-out winds expire so soft." The floods may come, the winds may blow, the swellings of Jordan may rise, and its mountain waves and billows may beat hard against his bark; but he is INSURED: he can put out to sea in safety; he has a good vessel, and a good captain, and a good landing-place; and hence, embarked on the ark of the gospel, with Christ, the Lord of the winds and the sea, at the helm, he is enabled to "be still, and see the salvation of God."

"Here I lie waiting for the issue," said the Rev. C. Simeon, of Cambridge, on his dying-couch, "without a fear, without a doubt, and without a wish. I am enjoying the sweetest peace: I cannot have more peace." After Mr. Robert Esh had tenderly embraced each of his sons and daughters, and exhorted them all to meet their departed mother and their departing father in heaven, falling back on his pillow, he said, "I die in peace."

"How blest the righteous when he dies!

When sinks his weary soul to rest,

How mildly beam the closing eyes,

How gently heaves th' expiring breast!

So fades the summer's cloud away,

So sinks the gale when storms are o'er,

So gently shuts the eye of day,

So dies a wave along the shore.



Life's duty done, as sinks the clay,  
Light from its load the spirit flies;  
While heaven and earth combine to say,  
How blest the righteous when he dies!"

Nor is this peaceful and happy experience in the hour of departure peculiar to the aged pilgrim, who may be thought to be weary of life for other than religious reasons; it is as much the heritage of the young Christian as the hoary-headed sire of fourscore years. A little child, when dying, was asked whither he was going? "To heaven," said the child. "And what makes you wish to be there?" "Because Christ is there." "But," said a friend, "what if Christ should leave heaven?" "Well," said the child, "I will go with him." "O!" said a little dying saint to her teacher, "will you get a crown?" The teacher paused and wept; and, before she had time to reply, the infant emigrant said, "Well, if Christ does not give you a crown, I will take mine from my head, and put it on yours." "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings" we have testimonies to the power of religion in a dying-hour.

And this is true, not of mere children only, who may be supposed not to have tasted of the pleasures of the world; but of the young man in the meridian of life. Mr. Golding died at the age of twenty-four years. A little before his death, his brother said to him, "You seem to enjoy foretastes of heaven." He replied, "O! this is no longer a foretaste: this is heaven! I not only



feel the climate, but I breathe the ambrosial air of heaven, and shall soon enjoy the company." "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

5. *It is often joyful.*

"I joy and rejoice with you all." Phil. ii. 17.

To depart in peace is the very least that the spiritual emigrant has reason to expect in life's last hour. Not a few of the faithful followers of Jesus have experienced the most exquisite joy as they have crossed the line that separates the kingdom of grace from the kingdom of glory. When the Rev. Mr. Toplady was dying, he abounded in holy joy: "O!" said he, "what delights! who can fathom the joys of the third heaven?" Bursting into tears of joy, he said, "It will not be long before God takes me, for no mortal can live after the glories which God has manifested to my soul."

The Rev. W. Janeway, when departing, said to his son, "That fit of weeping in which you saw me, was a fit of overpowering love and joy. Had that joy been greater, I question whether I could have borne it, whether it would not have separated soul and body. My heart is brimful; I can hold no more. I bless God I can die." The dying experience of the Rev. John Janeway, the son of the above, is so strikingly similar to that of his father, that we cannot forbear to record it in this place: "Surely this," said he, "is akin to hea-

ven! If this be dying, dying is sweet: let no true Christian ever be afraid of dying. I have what my soul desires upon earth. I want but one thing, and that is a speedy lift to heaven. I expect no more here, I cannot desire more, I cannot bear more. Hallelujah! hallelujah!"

Neither is the joy of which we have spoken exclusively confined to such as sustain high offices in the Christian Church: it is often abundantly vouchsafed to the humblest of its members. "Poor Pompey! poor Pompey is dying!" said the friends who surrounded an old African negro. The old saint, animated with the prospect before him, said to them with much earnestness, "Don't call me *poor* Pompey: I KING Pompey!" referring to the passage in Scripture in which the saints are spoken of as being kings and priests unto God.

On the other hand, be it remembered that these strong consolations are not confined to the poor, who, being much the children of sorrow here, might be supposed to rejoice exceedingly in the cheering prospect of a better life hereafter: they are often bestowed on such as have every thing earthly to excite a desire to remain on this side Jordan. A short time before the death of Mr. Cobb, of Boston, he said, "God has prospered me, and I have every thing to tie me here. I am happy in my family, and have property enough; but how small and mean does this world appear when we are on a sick-

bed! Nothing can equal my enjoyment in the near prospect of heaven. My hope in Christ is worth infinitely more than all other things. The blood of Christ, the blood of Christ—none but Christ!”

6. *It is sometimes triumphant.*

“O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?” 1 Cor. xv. 25.

The good man is always victorious over the last enemy: however long the campaign may be, and however hard the battle, he always carries off the conqueror's palm, and sometimes goes through death triumphant home to heaven. “Now, only,” says the biographer of the Rev. J. Ely, of Leeds, “were heard from his dying lips utterances of calm and assured peace. He rejoiced, he triumphed in Christ, he gloried in the cross. He felt his foundation; he knew his course; he abided by it. His peace flowed as a river. He was more than conqueror.” When Dr. Hamilton was informed by his medical men that his end was near, he exclaimed, “Those are the best tidings you could have brought me.” He described his sense of heavenly enjoyment as amounting to transport. He spoke in the strain of a Christian hero, standing on the brink of eternity. He said, “he had taught his people how to live, and it now became him to teach them how to die.”

“This is heaven begun,” said the Rev. S. Scott, during his last illness. “I have done with darkness for

ever—for ever. Satan is vanquished; and now nothing remains but salvation with eternal glory—*eternal* glory.” When one said to Philip Jenks, “How hard it is to die!” he said, “O, no, no! Easy dying, blessed dying, glorious dying! I have experienced more happiness in dying two hours this day than in my whole life. It is worth a whole life to have such an end as this.” “What brightness is this I see?” said Mr. Holland, when he was departing: “have you lighted some candles?” His attendant answered, “No; it is the sunshine you see.” “Sunshine!” said he; “it is my Saviour’s shine. Now farewell, world; welcome, heaven. The day-star from on high hath visited my heart.”

Even timorous WOMAN has frequently evinced the most complete victory and signal triumph over the last enemy. A pious female at Barrow, in Lincolnshire, Miss —, superintended the making of her own coffin, and made all her own funeral arrangements, with as much composure and fortitude as she would have prepared for an ordinary journey. Charlotte Elizabeth, when dying, exclaimed, alluding to some dear Jewish friends, “Tell them that Jesus is the Messiah: tell them flesh and heart faileth me, but Jesus does not fail me.” Mrs. Hervey said, as she walked along the subterraneous road to bliss, “If this is the dark valley, it has not a dark spot in it.” She said, “All is light! LIGHT!” She saw Christ, and said, “If all other glory

were annihilated, himself would be a universe of glory." How triumphant is grace! Hannah More said on her death-bed, "O, glorious grave! I know that my Redeemer liveth! It is a glorious thing to die!" Lady Huntingdon, when very near her end, said, "I shall go to my Father this night."

Elizabeth Humphrey, of Leeds, who was well known to the author, said to her brother, who was in attendance to render assistance to her as she took her departure, "Give me the looking-glass, Michael;" adding, "I want to look at death in my own countenance!" He complied, and, after gazing the monster in the face for a while, she smilingly and triumphantly uttered the words, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

7. *It is occasionally glorious.*

"Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory."

1 Cor. xv. 57.

We have often heard of the glorious death of heroes; and if a statesman, a warrior, or a philosopher chance to leave the world without visible horror, his fortitude entitles him to a niche in the temple of the world's fame; historians write his biography, and sublimest poets sing his funeral lay. And if the world honors its own, so does the Church. Heaven loves its own, as well as earth. If the pen of historians will not write



the biography of the heroes of the cross, the pen of inspiration will. If the voice of men will not speak of the valiant for the truth, and the champions of the gospel, the voice of God will perpetuate their memory, and immortalize their fame. I heard a voice from *earth* saying, "Write, happy are the dead who have died on the battle-field, covered with martial glory." But I heard another voice proclaim the honor, the happiness, the glory of the Christian hero: "I heard a voice from *heaven* saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth!"

There is moral triumph, spiritual grandeur, and divine glory about the last end of the followers of the dying God, that beggars all description. Nor is this moral glory peculiar to the nineteenth century; it also distinguished the first. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, died amid a shower of stones, crying with a loud voice for God to have mercy on his murderers, saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And when he had said this he fell asleep. When Peter was about to put off his tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus had showed him, though he had thus seen the chains that would bind him, the instruments that would torture him, and looked into the grave that persecution had dug for him, yet, standing on the very brink of a martyr's tomb, he said, in effect, for the encouragement of all the partakers of "like precious faith,"



“There is one thing that I wish to be remembered on earth when I have gone to heaven ; and it is this : We have not followed ‘cunningly devised fables,’ when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.” When Paul was a prisoner at Rome, and under sentence of death, he said, in effect, to Timothy, his son in the gospel : “Looking back on the *past*, I have nothing to *regret* ; ‘I have fought a good fight :’ when I think on the *present*, though martyrdom in its most dreadful form stares me in the face, I have nothing to *fear* ; for I am now ready to be offered : I have finished my course, and I have kept the faith ; and as to the *future*, I have nothing to *desire* ; for I have all, and abound : all that a dying man either can have or desire to have ! all is brightness and glory for the future : ‘*Henceforth* there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.’ I have won Christ : I shall enter heaven, and inherit glory. Do thy diligence to come to me.”

And what shall we say more ? for the time would fail us to tell of all the illustrious worthies of the apostolic Church, and how triumphantly and gloriously they left the world, and entered heaven. Suffice it for us to close this section with a few examples of the glorious departures of Christians of more recent and modern times, which we have copied from the author of “*Life’s Last Hours* ;” examples which go to prove that the

moral glory which occasionally crowns the Christian at his final departure, is neither confined to the apostolic nor the present age of Christianity ; but that, from the beginning until now, it has pleased God, from time to time, to enable the Christian emigrant to leave this world in the most victorious, triumphant, and glorious manner.

“ Justin Martyr, whipped to death, (A. D. 163,) expressed his expectation of future glory. Polycarp, burned alive, (167,) assured those who bound him, that God would enable him to stand unmovable in the hottest flames. Irenæus died a martyr's death in triumph, (208.) Origen suffered extraordinary tortures with the utmost firmness, (253.) Cyprian thanked God that he was called to suffer for his name, (258.) Athanasius and Ambrose died in peace and honor, (373, 397.) As also did Basil, (379.) Chrysostom, banished for his religion, (407,) uttered in his last moments, and amidst the cruel harassing of his guards, ‘Glory be to God for all events.’ Augustin departed in the most edifying penitence, (430.) Bede, called the venerable, expired amidst holy exercises and much joy, (735.) Wycliffe, when anticipating a violent end, said, ‘To live and be silent is, with me, impossible,’ (1384.) Huss, as he suffered at the stake, avowed, ‘What I taught with my lips, I now seal with my blood,’ (1415.) Martin Luther, when led into his dying-chamber, said, ‘I go to rest in God,’ (1546.) Calvin drew his last breath amidst holy admonitions and encouragements, (1564.)

Melancthon rejoiced to die, because he should see God and Christ, (1560.) Knox went from his pulpit to his dying-couch. Hooper, Latimer, and Ridley, amidst flames, gave their last testimonies to the truth. Baxter was almost transfigured. When asked how he was, his reply was, 'Almost well.' Howard, the philanthropist, breathed his last sigh far from home, declaring that death had no terrors for him. And the venerable John Wesley sang like the swan in departing: his last testimony was, 'The best of all is, God is with us.'"

To the above might be added thousands of similar testimonies in favor of the Christian religion, but we shall adduce one more only: "Dr. Payson, when dying, exclaimed, like a warrior returning from the field of triumph, 'The battle's fought! the battle's fought! and the victory is *won!* the victory is won for ever! The celestial city is full in my view: its glories beam upon me; its breezes fan me; its odors are wafted to me; its music strikes upon my ears; and its spirit breathes into my heart. I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun, exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm.'"

8. *It is always safe.*

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Ps. cxvi. 15.

In the absence of all external evidences of a triumphant departure, the good man always dies *safely*. It is the chief glory of our holy Christianity, that "Whoso hearkens unto her shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." To all human appearances, the Christian dies most usefully when he dies slowly, exemplifying the passive graces of patient endurance, humble submission, and meek resignation to the will of God. He dies the most agreeably and delightfully when he leaves the world in the full triumph of faith. But it is our unspeakable happiness to know that the safety of the departing Christian does not depend upon his feelings, but on the faithfulness and ability of Christ to save in a dying-hour. For it is not said in the Scriptures, Blessed are they only who die shouting the victory ; or, happy are they only who expire on their beds amid the tranquil and peaceful feelings of the domestic chamber ; or, that those only are safe who leave the world in a transport of joy. But thus said the voice which John heard from heaven, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord : " blessed are they who have sought and found an interest in Christ—die *when* they may, in childhood or youth, in mature life or old age—die *how* they may, by sudden accident or lingering sickness—die *where* they may, at home or abroad, by land or by sea, in the house or in the field, in the city or in the wilderness—die *as* they may, in the

sunshine or in the shade—blessed are they who die at last as they lived—"in the Lord."

The Rev. John Newton, one day, at his table, mentioned the death of a lady. A young woman, who sat opposite, immediately said, "O! sir, how did she die?" The venerable man replied, "There is a more important question than that, my dear, which you should have asked first." "Sir," said she, "what question can be more important than 'How did she die?'" "How did she live?" was Mr. Newton's answer. "I shall die silently," said the celebrated Rev. G. Whitefield to Dr. Finley. "It has pleased God to enable me to bear so many testimonies for him during my life, that he will require none from me when I die." And the manner of his death verified the prediction. The venerable and Rev. William Clowes—one of the principal founders of the Primitive Methodist Connection, and one of the most laborious and successful home missionaries of the age in which he lived—left the world in comparative silence. But though he was deprived of the power of speech, yet he expressed himself by signs that his friends understood, and signified that he was succored in death by the principles which he had taught in life. He lived believing in Christ, and died trusting in him; and, such being the case, we may add:

"Though more happy, yet not more secure,  
Were the glorified spirits in heaven."



Missionary Williams died, like his Lord and Master, by the very hands of those whom he was seeking to save. But the "martyr of Erromanga" died in safety and glory, far, far away. Here is a poor beggar laid at the rich man's gate, a spiritual emigrant departing in the street ; but he safely breathes his life out there, for Lazarus "was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom." It was at this dying scene that the soliloquist borrowed the ideas which he so happily expresses in his "Dying Christian to his Soul." It was Lazarus that he was listening to when he overheard the sayings of a saint departing to his soul :

"Vital spark of heavenly flame,  
Quit, O quit this mortal frame :  
Trembling, hoping, lingering, flying,  
O ! the pain, the bliss of dying !  
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,  
And let me languish into life.  
Hark ! they whisper, angels say,  
Sister spirit, come away.  
What is this absorbs me quite,  
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,  
Drowns my spirit, draws my breath :  
Tell me, my soul, can this be death ?  
The world recedes, it disappears ;  
Heaven opens on my eyes ; my ears  
    With sounds seraphic ring !  
Lend, lend your wings ! I mount, I fly !  
O grave ! where is thy victory ?  
    O death ! where is thy sting ?"

Such is the end of a life spent in the service of God.



Religion always answers well to die with ; and if ever you are tempted to lean to the side of infidelity, you will do well to consider the deathbed scenes of infidels, in contrast with the peaceful "chamber where the good man meets his fate." Infidelity fails to sustain its votaries when their heart and their flesh fail. It plants its thorns in the dying-pillow ; it hardens the bed of death ; it darkens the day of judgment ; it procures a wretched eternity ; and most men abandon its principles in their last sickness, or in their dying-hour. But Christianity never fails, never needs changing, and is never abandoned in the time of departure. Many waters cannot quench it ! fires cannot consume it ! pain cannot destroy it ! It is a light that the darkness of death cannot extinguish ! It is an ark which the swellings of Jordan cannot sink ! a life which death can never take away ! "It builds a bridge from this world to the next, o'er death's dark gulf ;" and hence, "his hand the good man fastens on the skies, and bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl !" Embrace it, practice it, glory in it ! It will leave you nothing to regret, nothing to fear, nothing to desire in "life's last hour." It will make all your bed in your last sickness ; it will secure your triumph over the last enemy ; it will procure your acquittal at the last judgment ; it will exalt you to heaven—to a crown of life ! May the writer and the reader depart in peace, at last, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE ABUNDANT ENTRANCE.

“For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly.”—  
2 Pet. i. 11.

WE have followed the Christian emigrant through the course of his earthly pilgrimage: let us now, assisted by analogy, reason, and revelation, endeavor to contemplate his safe arrival at the shores of the better land, and witness his entrance through the gates into the city: “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Observe we—

1. *The quick transition.*

“Absent from the body, and present with the Lord.”  
2 Cor. v. 8.

When we speak of a journey by land, or of a voyage by sea, we can do so with precision, knowing the exact limits of such measurable distances; but perhaps there is no describable distance between the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of glory. It may be found that the

last step out of grace is the first step into glory: that the highest degree of a Christian's attainments in grace on earth is the next link in the golden chain to the lowest degree of his enjoyment of glory in heaven. The probability is that a state of grace is glory begun below; and that a state of glory is grace perfected above; that grace is the beginning of spiritual life on earth, and glory the completion, perfection, and perpetuity of it in heaven. For "he that believeth on the Son of God hath," already hath, "everlasting life." "Well, Richard," said the late Rev. Rowland Hill to one of his servants, "do you hope to get to heaven?" "Yes, master, I do," was the reply of old Richard. "Well, but how do you intend to get there? Heaven is a long way off; is it not?" "No, sir," responded the old servant; "it is not such a great way off, master: only three steps. The first step is out of self, the second step is into Christ, and the next step is into heaven." But, even according to this method of calculation, it may be a work of some difficulty to get *clearly* out of self, *fully* into Christ, and *safely* into heaven.

George Turner, of Hull, was a person well known to the writer. His mother, who stood by the side of his dying-couch, said, "George, thou wilt soon be in heaven;" and such was his sense of the Divine presence and glory, that he exclaimed, "Mother, I'm there! I'm

there, mother !” Here was the experience of that poetic representation—

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate  
Is privileged beyond the common walks  
Of virtuous life—quite on the verge of heaven.”

“There’s land ahead,” said an old seaman—who seems to have been born in the breeze, cradled in the storm, and bred on the ocean-wave—when he was departing. While buffeting the swellings of Jordan, and when his friends inquired how things looked in the prospect, he said, “There’s land ahead.” A short time before he completed his voyage o’er life’s rough sea, as he was rapidly receding from the view of mortals on this side the river, a Christian inquired how he felt, when he replied, “I’m just rounding the point.” Shortly after this, he was desired to signify the state of his mind, in his near approach to the opposite shore, when he was evidently porting his helm to run into harbor ; and, with his last breath, he exclaimed, “Let go the anchor !”—and he was absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

2. *The indisputable citizenship.*

“That they may have *right* to the tree of life.” Rev. xxii. 14.

By the indisputable citizenship, we mean simply this : whoever complies with the published terms of inheritance, namely, “Repentance toward God, and faith to-

ward our Lord Jesus Christ," shall not have his right to inherit heaven disputed. It is our native *home*, our Father's house, our celestial *family residence*.

Considered as an *inheritance*, it is our own. By right of invitation to it, by right of promise, and by deed of gift, it is our *patrimonial estate*. It was originally willed to us by our Heavenly Father, and though it was once forfeited and lost, yet our elder brother and kinsman Redeemer bought back the forfeited heritage with his own precious blood; and now it is our own again by right of redemption and blood-bought title. It is the bequest of Christ to Christians, and the gift of God to all his children, who "are heirs of heaven according to the hope of eternal life."

The holy people of that city will not speak to you from the top of its walls, or bar its massive doors, or barricade its streets; you will be required only to produce your passport, and show your title, and then a million voices will bid you enter and inherit glory: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the heir of glory shall come in." No, no; it is not a *land* that we shall have to invade, or a country that we shall have to conquer, the original people of which will dispute our right to the possession of territory with them. It is the "purchased possession;" it is our native country, our fatherland, and the "kingdom prepared for us from the foundation of the

world." Fear not, Christian emigrant, you will not have to gain your possession in the better country by the intrigues of stratagem, nor by the force of arms; for it is your "Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Only repent of your sins, believe in Christ, and obey the commands of God, and heaven is sure: "For blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates, into the city."

3. *The immediate admission.*

"To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Luke xxiii. 43.

From Holy Scripture it appears that as soon as the spiritual traveller shakes the dust of the wilderness from his feet, he takes possession of the land of Canaan; and that, having "washed his robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," in this present world, he will not have to bleach on the borders of the world to come for some indefinite period, before he is permitted to enter the kingdom. Having washed in the "Fountain that is opened in the house of David," he will have to enter no other house of purification. He will need no other fountain for sin and uncleanness, who has been cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ.

There are no purgatorial fires to pass through between the Christian's departure from the desert, and his arrival in safety and triumph at the Paradise of



God : "And he that is filthy, let him be filthy still ; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Lazarus went direct from the rich man's gate to heaven. He was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom : there would be no purgatory there. The penitent thief had been a sinner of the baser sort ; his heart was foul with pollution, and his hands crimsoned with blood : he was steeped to the very lips in crime, and was over head and ears in guilt and transgression. If ever man wanted mending after he left this world, and finishing off in the world to come, surely one whose crimes had cast him into the condemned cell ; one whose villanies had hung him upon the gibbet of execution ; one who was so desperately wicked, and had so little time to obtain a meetness for heaven, would need purgatorial fires to perfect his purification, if ever man did ; but no, there was no imperfection in his salvation ; nothing short of complete redemption ; nothing to purge, nothing to refine, nothing to purify, in the world to come ; he was clean every whit ! there was not *a spot* on him, or a wrinkle about him ! Jesus Christ said, "Paradise to-day !" "Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Hallelujah to Jesus ! he justified, sanctified, and glorified a penitent thief in less than six hours, and carried him direct from the gallows to glory. No, no : the spiritual mariner has not to reef canvas, to strike sail, nor drop anchor, until he

has reached the port. There is no standing out to sea, or lying out in the roads ; no riding quarantine off the beach, before he is allowed to go into harbor. Those who have the heaviest passage run into port with their sails set, and never slack their weather-braces until they are laid alongside the pier of Paradise, where they leap at once on the beach, and shout on the shore,

“The voyage of life’s at an end,  
The mortal affliction is past.”

“For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly.”

4. *The triumphal reception.*

“And may enter in through the gates into the city.”  
Rev. xxii. 14.

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the heir of glory shall come in.” It was customary among the ancient Romans to honor their generals and heroes with a triumph after a successful termination of war. The conqueror returned from the battle-field in his chariot of war ; and as he approached the capital of his country, he was met by the citizens at the gate of the city, and honored with a public welcome to the metropolis of the empire. “On such occasions,” says Dr. A. Clarke, “the general was usually clad in a rich, purple robe, interwoven with figures of gold, setting forth the grandeur of his achievements. His buskins were beset with pearls, and

his head was adorned with a crown, which at first was of laurel, but afterward of pure gold. In one hand he carried a laurel, the emblem of victory, and in the other a truncheon, the weapon whereby he had achieved his conquest. He was carried in a magnificent chariot, adorned with ivory and plates of gold. To keep him humble amidst these great honors, a slave stood at his back, casting out incessant railings and reproaches, and carefully enumerating all his vices. Musicians led up the procession, and played triumphal pieces in praise of the general." Myriads hailed his approach, and ten thousand voices sang his welcome: "Lo, the conquering hero comes."

But how spiritless and trivial are all human pageant-ries, and earthly triumphs, compared with the abundant entrance that is ministered unto the heroes of the cross into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They have fought a better battle, and won a brighter victory, and are therefore honored with a more signal and glorious triumph. They desolated no country, depopulated no towns, sacked no cities, disturbed no villages, broke up no families, and did no man wrong in their way to heaven. Their warfare was bloodless. There were no wounded to heal, no dead to bury, no orphan's cries to hush, nor widow's tears to wipe, after their campaign. Behold that veteran warrior, the soldier of Christ, robed in the beau-

ties of holiness, and waving the victor's palm as he approaches the celestial city of the great King, to enjoy his triumph and receive his crown—a crown of life. What myriads meet him at the pearly gates to greet him on his safe arrival! See what millions throng the golden street as he passes along in his triumphal car of excessive glory. What innumerable multitudes gaze, admire, and applaud, when he ascends his throne :

“Hark! ten thousand voices cry,  
Victory, victory, through the sky!”

His faults are never named; they are all forgiven; for “the accuser of the brethren is cast out” of that city. But, on the contrary, his deeds of honor and valor, and his works of piety and charity, are confessed before the Father and his holy angels, by the King of Zion himself: “I was hungry, and he gave me meat; I was thirsty, and he gave me drink; I was sick, and he visited me; in prison, and he came to me:” “He was with me in all my tribulations, and followed me whithersoever I went.” Hallelujah.

5. *The settlers' welcome.*

“The Spirit and the bride say, Come.” Rev. xxii. 17.

Viewing the Christian emigrant's passage to glory under the figure of a voyage, he may be represented as a mariner in a stately ship, going into port under full canvas, floating away on the flowing tide, and running before a fair wind, with signals waving, colors flying,

and music playing, amid the greetings of gazing multitudes. For how will those kindred spirits who are already settled in the promised land, and especially such as he may have induced to embark for heaven, run down to the pearly shore, and, crowding the celestial beach, hail his arrival, and sing his welcome to the skies! One of the Christian martyrs, on being asked, by way of inducement to abandon his religious principles, for which he was just about to suffer, "if he did not love his wife and children who stood by him weeping?" said, "Love them! yes: if all the world were gold, and at my disposal, I would give it all for the satisfaction of living with them, though it were in a prison." What, then, would be his satisfaction to hail their entrance into glory, and to live with them in Paradise? Did Jacob and Joseph, at their first meeting, after their painful and long separation, fall on each other's neck and weep for joy "a good while?" Then, what will be the greetings, gushing emotions, and throbbing sensibilities of beloved parents and children, of affectionate brethren and sisters, and other relations and friends who have been parted by death, when they meet again in the better land to part no more?

"No lingering look, no parting sigh,  
Their future meeting knows;  
But friendship beams from every eye,  
And hope immortal grows."



And how will *Christian* friends, as David and Jonathan, who have loved each other as their own souls, after such grief at parting on earth, rejoice, with joy unspeakable, to meet again in heaven! What gladness and joy will fill the hearts of Christian converts, when their spiritual instructors cross the threshold of heaven! It is recorded in history, that when Charles the Fifth landed at Tunis, "ten thousand men and women, who were slaves within the city, when they heard the approach of their deliverer, rose and broke their chains, and rushing toward the gate, as the emperor entered the town, knelt down, hailed him as their deliverer, and prayed God to bless him." But what is this to the welcome that awaits the faithful minister when he enters heaven, from those whom he has been instrumental in turning to righteousness? O, how will the blessings of them who were ready to perish come upon him, when he arrives in the better land! "Surely heaven will be filled with double joy, and unusual acclamations, when he enters through the gates into the city."

And Christian ministers will feel equal joy and pleasure in hailing their converts to the shores of the better country. "I recollect," says the Rev. G. Chapman, "having once said something about its being likely that Christian friends on earth will be friends in heaven; upon which an old chief, who had embraced religion, said, 'When I get to heaven, I will go straight to Je-



sus, and tell him how I love to thank him for sending you white man teach me the way to heaven; and then I will go back again, and sit at door until you come; and when you come, I will take you by the hand, lead you to all the captains and chiefs there, and I will say, "Here is white man who first told me about Jesus and this beautiful place: this white man brought me to heaven;" and then I will take you Jesus, and I will say, "Here is white man, whom you sent to teach me the way to heaven;" and we will both fall at his feet, and he shall have all the praise and the glory for ever.' O my friends," said the missionary, "that was the happiest moment of my life." What, then, will that minister feel, when he meets the souls in glory for whom he toiled, and wept, and prayed, and hazarded his life? How will he then rejoice that he has not run in vain, neither labored in vain! "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing?" are not even ye the fruit of our spiritual toils, "in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy."

6. *The natives' greetings.*

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God." Luke xv. 10.

Now it is abundantly testified in the Scriptures, that angels are deeply interested in the welfare and happiness of mankind. It will be seen by a reference to the records of holy writ, that, from the beginning, they

have manifested the tenderest regard for him, by warning him of danger, assisting him in difficulties, and rejoicing over him to do him good. As we have had occasion to show, more at large, it will be remembered that, at the creation of man, they shouted for joy; at his redemption, they sang "Glory to God in the highest;" and at his conversion, they hold a jubilee in heaven: "For I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

We have seen that they attend to his wants in the way to the kingdom; and as carefully guard him against danger as though their own happiness would be incomplete if he failed to inherit the promised land. They are represented as teaching him to ponder the path of his feet, holding him up in his goings, as a tender and careful nurse teaches her children to walk by steadying and succoring them with her arms: "For it is written, he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." In all his journeyings through the desert, they are his companions, and constant friends, and guardians. And when he has completed the days of the years of his pilgrimage, be they many or few, he is "carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Now our inference is this: if they manifest all this concern when the emigrant starts for the better land, and evince all this interest in his

well-being on the way, they will greet him with ten thousand welcomes on his safe arrival at his journey's end. For if they feel all this joy at his creation, redemption, and conversion, then what must they feel at his glorification? They said "Hallelujah!" and again they said "Hallelujah!"

7. *The Governor's blessing.*

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." Matt. xxv. 34.

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in." They do not seem to remember these acts of charity; but the King has not forgotten their works of faith and labors of love; he remembers them still. He rewards them with his benediction: "Come, ye blessed of my Father." They do not seem to understand such a friendly recognition, such honorable mention, and such unutterable blessing; but he can explain: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." What blessings are here from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!

How will the Holy Spirit, the emigrant's sanctifier,

comforter, and guide through the wilderness, hail his arrival in Canaan! Will not the "Spirit and the Bride say, Come:" "Come, and welcome, pilgrim, thou?"

And what shall we say of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who journeyed from his throne to the manger; who travelled from the manger, through the garden, to the cross, and ascended from the cross back to glory, to complete the redemption of his blood-bought people? Surely if there is one heart in heaven that will give the Christian a more cordial reception than any other, it will be the heart that was pierced for him. Will not Christ say, "Come, ye blessed," "welcome here!" "Come up hither! ye have partaken of my sorrows, enter ye into the joy of your Lord?"

And the same may be said of the joyful reception which the compassionate Father of mercies, and God of all grace, vouchsafes to his returning prodigal children, on their arrival at his house with many mansions. Hear him, as the poor returned wanderer enters in at the everlasting doors of his holy habitation—"Bring forth that best robe, and put it on him." Hear him, as the once lost but now restored son makes haste along the golden street, to fall in adoration at the Father's feet: "Bring forth the instruments of melody; tune your harps, O ye angels, and strike the timbrels of heaven, O ye saints; and let us be merry; for this, my son, was dead, and is alive again, and was lost, and is found."

8. *The delightful scenery.*

“And I saw heaven opened.” Rev. xix. 11.

We have some knowledge of the pleasing emotions that arise in the mind, at the first sight of home, after a long absence and a weary journey ; at the first view of land ahead, when we near the point of destination, after a tedious and protracted voyage ; and at the first sight of beloved relatives and friends, after a painful and long separation. But who can adequately describe the thrilling emotions of the spiritual emigrant, as he first descries that far-off land ? After being tossed with the tempest, buffeted by the winds, and drenched in the waves, during his stormy passage o’er life’s rough sea, what exquisite emotions must he feel when, for the first time, he sees the port of glory !

The most enchanting views of earth, when nature presents her most surpassing scenes of loveliness and beauty ; when “the sunshine of spring is spread upon its mountains, and the verdure of spring is resting on its vales ;” when creation is robed in her garlands of flowers, and decked in all her charms, give only imperfect ideas of the glories of heaven. All terrestrial glories wither in comparison with the far more glorious scenery of that land of light, whither the departed emigrant has gone. The delightful garden of Eden, where man first enjoyed a little heaven on earth, wears the aspect of a sterile desert, when contrasted with the splen-



did scenes of the Paradise of God. Here are roses without thorns, and honey without a sting; here are flowers that never fade, and fruits that grow on trees of immortality. Here is an Eden of supreme and everlasting delight; a Paradise without a forbidden tree, without a serpent to beguile, and without a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life :

“O the transporting, rapturous scene  
That rises to my sight:  
Sweet fields arrayed in living green,  
And rivers of delight!”

What unutterable sensations the new settler feels when, for the first time, he beholds the innumerable company of the redeemed, and distinctly recognizes a father tuning his harp of gold, a mother sweeping her celestial lyre, a brother or sister striking the timbrels of heaven, a son or a daughter lifting the voice in the song of salvation, and other kindred spirits and friends swelling the hallelujah choruses of redemption! See him range the sweet plains, on the banks of the river of life, or basking beneath the blissful bowers of the Paradise of God, in company with those that he loved on earth as his own soul: “For they shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, in the kingdom of God.” What a sight is here! Abraham and his Isaac; Jacob and his Joseph; David and his Jonathan; Samuel and the prophets, Peter and



John, James and Luke, Mark and Matthew, Paul and Timothy, Wesley, and Whitefield, and Fletcher, and Clowes, and Bourne, and you and yours; and, last of all, us and ours! What songs of deliverance are here!

“The winter of distress is past,  
We’ve gained the peaceful happy shore;  
The storm has spent its rage at last,  
And suffering we shall know no more.”

And O how transporting is the first sight of angels! How resplendent is Michael! How glorious does Gabriel appear! What beautiful creatures are cherubs and seraphs! How brightly shine those morning stars! “Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!”

But the most beatific sight is the glory of our redeeming God! O the ineffable sight of the glory of Christ! the first sight of the “Lamb as it had been slain!”—of him “who was betrayed, forsook, denied, prayed, languished, wept, bled, thirsted, groaned, and died;” they shall see Him; the fairest first-born of heaven, not as he *was*—the persecuted child of Bethlehem, the despised Nazarene, the hated man of Galilee, or the crucified of Calvary—but as he *is*: they shall see him in his exaltation and glory; where the humiliation of the stable, the agony of the garden, and the sufferings of the cross, are only remembered with joy; and when, having seen of the travail of his soul, he is satisfied; having brought

numberless millions of men to the regions of immortal glory. O how overwhelming is the vision of the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity! How blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!

9. *The charming melody.*

"And I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps." Rev. xiv. 2.

If the first sight of heaven is so perfectly transporting to the eyes of the spiritual emigrant, as he approaches the city, and passes through the portals of the Paradise of God; what, then, shall we say of its first sounds, as they float on the harmonious breezes of Eden, and fall in celestial melodies on his glorified ears? According to Luther, "music is one of the fairest gifts of God: it relieves the heart, refines the passions, and improves the understanding." When the music of a civilized country burst for the first time on the astonished ears of the people of a solitary isle in the Pacific, the effect was amazing: they fell down upon their faces, as in the act of adoration, and seemed as if they regarded the whole as a vision from the skies. "What, then, would have been the effect, if they had listened to one of the favorite airs of heaven, such as the choristers of glory sang, in the 'hill country of Judea,' at the nativity of Jesus?"

It is recorded of a Persian prince, who was notorious for his cruelty, that he was induced to pardon and libe-

rate nearly thirty thousand captives whom he had ordered to be put to death, by the influence of music performed by one of the victims : overpowered with harmony, he melted into tears of pity, repented of his cruelty, and ordered the instant release of the prisoners. Now, if the music performed by a solitary individual had such an influence on the mind of a bad man on earth, what will be the effect of celestial melodies, by millions in concert, on the good man in heaven ?

The writer had the privilege of witnessing the celebration of the Halifax Sunday-school jubilee in 1846. There was an assemblage of twenty-two thousand Sabbath-school children and teachers, all previously trained to sing the same music and hymns ; with a band of about five hundred instrumental performers, and about ten thousand spectators, who joined in the jubilee songs of the occasion. And when the thirty-two thousand human voices were raised in scientific tones, and hymns of adoration to Israel's God and Zion's King, and blended with the harmonious sounds of five hundred performers, on all manner of musical instruments, the melody was indescribable and overwhelming. What, then, must it be to enter heaven, amid the harping symphonies of innumerable millions, all trained, all perfect, and all in concert, at the last jubilee of the universe ?

Retire into the shades, ye Julliens and Paganinis of earth, with your dissonant sounds, discordant voices,

and jarring strings ; and even ye, Haydns and Handels, will do better than your best if you are permitted to join the choir of heaven ! Every heart is a melodious instrument there, every tongue a trumpet, every hand a harp, every voice a song, and every song a transport ! The chief musicians of all ages and nations are there ! There are the apostles and martyrs, the evangelists and the prophets, the patriarchs and the poets, and all the sweet singers of Israel. The Davids, and the sons of Asaph, and the Miriams, with their timbrels, and the Deborahs, with all the daughters of music, and the Michaels and the Gabriels, are there. *There* is no discord, no imperfect performers, no jarring strings. There is harmony divine, songs celestial, concert everlasting, anthems unutterable, and hallelujah echoes, that make the hills of heaven tremble to their broad base with vibration, and its valleys shout for joy. One song employs all nations : “ Worthy the Lamb.” Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah !

“O! may I bear some humble part  
In that immortal song,  
Wonder and joy shall tune my heart,  
And love command my tongue.”

10. *The perfect felicity.*

“In thy presence is fulness of joy.” Ps. xvi. 11.

Let us linger a while longer on the top of this glorious Pisgah, where we have stood to witness the emi-

grant's entrance into the promised land amid sights and sounds peculiar to the Paradise of God. Now, if such are the first sights and sounds, what, we ask, are his first feelings as he enters through the gates into the city? It cannot be too much to say that, from all this, he feels the enjoyment of *perfect felicity*.

He has attained to the enjoyment of *perfect purity*. He is perfectly pure himself, as innocent as Adam in his first estate, as holy as angels: he is like Jesus Christ. The place of his habitation is the undefiled temple of God. He has had boldness to pass beyond the veil, into the holy of holies, by the blood of Jesus. The society with which he mingles are holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. Infinitely removed from sin, and beyond the reach of sinners, he has "his fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

He is now in the possession of *perfect peace*. He has arrived safely in the place where "peace sheds its balm, and hope bends its rainbow, and the soul dwells at ease." His last doubt is removed, his last fear is annihilated, his last sorrow is fled, and his last grief has expired. He shall sin no more, suffer no more, and weep no more. He has nothing to regret, nothing to fear, nothing to desire. He inherits "all things." Every desire is accomplished, every hope realized, and every wish gratified. He has vanquished his foes, fought his way through, and won the day. The warfare is accomplished, and he



has overcome. The campaign is closed, and he is "more than conqueror." He hath ascended the hill, shouting the victory, entered the capital in triumph, and received his crown.

Safe in the covert from the tempest, the Christian mariner bids farewell to troublesome doubts and distressing fears. "Farewell, ye cloudy and dark days; farewell, ye blustering winds of agitation; farewell, ye stormy waves of affliction; farewell, ye gathering clouds of temptation; and farewell, for ever, ye pelting storms of persecution:"

"Adieu, adieu, to storms around,  
I'm safe within the harbor found:  
Temptation, sorrow, sin, and pain,  
Shall never interrupt again.  
He strikes aloud some heavenly string,  
In shining realms where seraphs sing,  
'Worthy the Lamb!'"

His peace flows as a river, it abounds as the waves of the sea, and passeth all understanding!

But his enjoyment is not merely of a negative kind—a bare deliverance from all possible evil; he has attained to the experience of *perfect joy*. He is now in possession of all positive and supreme good. He feels the joy that arises from a *retrospection* of the toils that he has endured, the dangers that he has escaped, and the difficulties that he has surmounted. He feels the joy of *conquest*, while he looks down upon his vanquished foes,



so far beneath his feet, and finds himself exalted to honor and glory, waving the victor's palm, bearing the laurels of triumph, and wearing the crown of signal and illustrious conquest. He feels the joy of *possession*. He has reached the home for which he journeyed through the wilderness; he inherits the Canaan for which he left Egypt, enjoys the recompense for which he suffered, receives the wages for which he labored, and reaps the harvest in joy that he sowed in tears.

His is the joy of *prospect*, also; the joy of the most delightful anticipation. Whatever amount of felicity he may feel, arising from the pleasing review of his past history, and the most complete satisfaction with his present state, he has still greater joy in the happy anticipation of the most delightful future that awaits him. The joys of conquest, the joys of agreeable associations, and the joys of pleasurable employment, are crowned with the joy of cheering prospects and glorious hope—the blessed hope of immortality, and the pleasing expectation of “eternal glory.” He feels the joy of *wonder* to find himself in such a Canaan after all his murmurings in the wilderness; the joy of amazement at the mercy and grace that, in spite of his waywardness in the desert, conducted him safely to such a Paradise of glory; and the joy of astonishment that, much as he heard, read, and conceived of the bliss of heaven, his thoughts are so infinitely exceeded in the glory that is revealed.

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And what shall we say more of the felicities of heaven, and the bliss of the spiritual emigrant safely arrived in the better land?

“We may speak of its pathways of gold,  
Of its walls decked with jewels so rare;  
Of its glories and pleasure untold;  
But what must it be to be there!”

It is happiness complete; it is pleasure perfect; it is joy unspeakable—fulness of joy! It is heavenly! it is divine! It is everlasting joy!

How delightful it is to stand on the top of Pisgah, and behold the triumphal entrance of the Christian hero into the glorious capital of the universe! How encouraging to see the spiritual mariner strike his sails and moor his vessel in the harbor of heaven! How interesting to witness the weary pilgrim's safe arrival at home, where the way-worn travellers rest together! What welcomes are here from the happy settlers! What greetings from the native population! What blessings from the gracious Governor of the better land! What transporting scenery is here! What charming melody! What perfect felicity is here!

Perhaps, Christian reader, you are a sufferer for Christ, on your way to the kingdom. Well, be of good cheer, you shall reign with him too! and, if faithful, you will soon be there. A few more hills to climb, and you will enter into rest! A few more stiles to get over,

and you are at your Father's house! A few more rivers to ford, and then you have crossed the last! A few more battles to fight, and the last enemy is conquered! A few more tempests to brave, and you will have reached the peaceful, happy shore :

“ For joyful Canaan's just before!  
Sweet spring is coming on!  
A few more storms of wind and rain,  
And winter will be gone.”

Heaven will make amends for all! 'Tis almost done!  
'tis almost o'er! you're nearly there! keep pursuing!  
fight on! tug at the oar! look upward, homeward, heavenward—“ That so an entrance may be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Amen.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE PERPETUAL POSSESSION.

“They shall inherit the land for ever.”—ISAIAH lx. 21.

HAVING witnessed the safe arrival of the spiritual emigrant to the better land, and his “abundant entrance through the gates into the city,” it remains only for us to observe, that, whatever be the nature and extent of his celestial inheritance, it is permanent as to duration, and most probably progressive in respect of improvement. Consider what we say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things pertaining to the perpetual possession of the Christian settler in the promised land. Observe,

1. *It is eternal glory.*

“Eternal glory by Christ Jesus.” 1 Pet. v. 10.

This is a distinguishing characteristic of the heritage of the saints of the Most High: “they shall possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” It is one of the chief glories of the work of Jesus Christ that “He hath obtained eternal redemption for us,” and

“perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” If we can but toil our way through the wilderness, ford the river in safety, climb the hill of Zion, and cross the threshold of heaven, “we shall go out no more for ever.” “And so shall we be ever with the Lord.”

It is said of a Roman emperor, that he once brought together every thing magnificent that his extensive empire produced, and exclaimed, in the pride of his heart, “What is there wanting here to complete felicity?” A courtier replied, “Continuance.” Lift up your eyes, now, and look on the immeasurable glory of the better land ; see all its delightful scenery ; the tree of life, the pastures green, the golden streets, and silver stream. Hear all its melodies ; its golden harps, celestial lyres, its anthems, concerts, and harmonious choirs. Feel all its transports, all its charms, its joys ecstatic, and its holy calms. Climb its blest mountains, bound o’er its verdant vales, and smell the fragrance every flower exhales. Pass through its woods and groves, bask in its bowers, and drink the honey from its fruits and flowers :

“Then add, to all the settler’s joys, Eternity !  
And bliss perpetual perfects his felicity.”

For, however happy the home of the saints in light, it is not a mere tent—a tabernacle, to be taken down ; but a house based on the Rock of ages, “a building of God, eternal in the heavens.” However rich the inheritance of glory, it is “incorruptible.” Glorious as the

kingdom of heaven may be, it is "a kingdom that cannot be moved." And bright as the crown of life is, "it fadeth not away." Indescribably sweet as the peace of celestial realms may be, it is "quietness and assurance for ever." Exquisite as heavenly pleasures are, they are "pleasures for evermore." How abundant soever the joys of heaven may prove, its charms are ceaseless: "Everlasting joy shall be unto them." Whatever may be the nature or the degree of the felicity which falls to the lot of the Christian in the better land, "it abideth for ever." While it is glory that "eye hath not seen, or ear heard, or heart conceived," it is "ETERNAL GLORY!"

Immortality belongs to all the glories of the better land; it blooms in its flowers, ripens in its fruits, and grows in all its blissful bowers. Its woods wave, its forests bend, its valleys teem, and its bright-topped hills are mantled o'er with immortality. Immortality beams in the sky, shines in the sun, breathes in the wind, and flows in the rivers of this heavenly region. It glistens on all the jasper walls, is graven on every pearly gate, is written on every golden street, and every throne; and is the burnishing gem of every crown. Every pulse beats, every countenance beams, every bosom heaves, and every heart in heaven bounds with the blessedness of immortality. Their golden harps and lyres are strung and tuned for immortality. World without end



is interwoven in every wreath they wear, and inscribed on every banner they wave. Endless duration is a chief ingredient of every viand they taste, and nectars their every cup of heavenly enjoyment. For *ever* echoes in all their anthems ; it is heard distinctly in their highest, noblest, sweetest song. All this, glorious and transporting as it is, all this is for ever ! and *ever* ! and EVER ! Hallelujah !

Fill your imagination with the sublimest conception of the blessedness of the happy settlers in the better land, and then ask the holy oracles, How long are they to enjoy this possession of celestial happiness ? and this is the answer : *Henceforth* ! “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ;” all this happiness and glory immediately, and all this eternally ! “*Henceforth* !” Pass over thousands of ages, in your thoughts, and ask the question again, and the answer is, *Henceforth* ! Multiply periods of duration equal to this, until they are numerous as the rain-drops, and the particles of dust that compose the material universe, and it is *henceforth* still ! The thought is overwhelming ; it leads us along, and along, and along, age after age ! and away, and away, and away, period after period ! and beyond, and beyond, and beyond, duration after duration ! and farther, and farther, and farther still, and then it is the same ineffable *henceforth* ! the same glorious for ever and ever !

"Come, O my soul, thy future glory trace:  
 If thou receive the Saviour's offered grace,  
 Infinite years in pleasure thou shalt spend,  
 Which never, never, never have an end!  
 Yes, thou shalt dwell where saints in glory are,  
 As many years as atoms in the air;  
 When those are past, as many to ensue,  
 As blades of grass and drops of morning dew;  
 When those are past, as many yet behind  
 As forest leaves when shaken with the wind;  
 When those are gone, as many thousands more  
 As grains of sand upon the ocean shore;  
 When those are spent, as many millions more  
 As moments in the millions passed before;  
 When all those blissful years, exempt from pain,  
 Are multiplied by myriads yet again,  
 Till numbers drown the thought: could I suppose  
 That then my bliss in heaven would have to close,  
 Thrice happy then my glorious lot would be,  
 But still that would not be eternity:  
 Eternity would then be just begun;  
 The day of bliss just dawning, rising heaven's bright sun;  
 The concert opening only; banquet just prepared;  
 First greetings scarcely past, first welcomes only shared!  
 The jubilee just commenced, the harps just strung,  
 Just tuned the lute, first timbrel struck, and anthem sung;  
 Just caught the strain by east, west, south, and north!  
 Their joy is INCONCEIVABLE! their happiness HENCEFORTH!"

2. *It is increasing glory.*

"A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

2 Cor. iv. 17.

To say the least, it is in the highest degree probable that our happiness in heaven will be progressive and increasing for ever and ever. Now, it is quite clear that the happiness that springs from the society of the

redeemed in heaven will be increased by the addition of every new member from the Church militant, to swell the numbers and join in the hallelujah choruses of the Church triumphant; until the last sinner, saved by grace, shall have entered heaven to inherit glory. And although there is no chancery court to traverse, or pending lawsuit's decision to await, before the spiritual emigrant is permitted to possess the better land, yet, perfect as his happiness may be on his arrival, it will be still more perfect when his most intimate companion, the body—which, worn out with the fatigue of the wilderness journey, he was compelled to leave behind on this side Jordan—shall arrive.

When this awakes from the slumber of ages on the blessed resurrection morn, and, refreshed with its repose in the peaceful tomb, shall arise from the sleep of the sepulchre in all the beauty of immortal youth, safe from “diseases and decline,” how much will the happiness of the saints in glory be increased! For body and soul, reünited, shall exultingly sing the death-dirge of death, and the destruction of the grave: “O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Whatever the resurrection may be to sinners, to saints it will be a glorious festal morn; to them the voice of the archangel will be the voice of joyful deliverance. When “the Lord himself

shall descend from heaven with a shout," it will be to them that sleep in him the shout of liberty : " Liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." And when the trump of God shall echo as high as heaven, as deep as hell, and as far as the dominions of mortality extend, terrific as the final blast may be to the ungodly, it will be to the righteous the trump of jubilee !

To the redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb, the day of judgment will be the most blessed day that ever broke from night ! the happiest and brightest that ever dawned on immortals blessed ! " The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." To the spiritual Israel of God, it will be the end of captivity, and the beginning of perfect, glorious, everlasting liberty ! the morning of complete triumph ! the day of finished and full redemption ! and the year of everlasting JUBILEE !

"Winged on the wind, and warbling hymns of love,  
Behold the blessed soar to realms above."

And it is the opinion of some of the wisest and most devoted members of the different sections of the Church of Christ, that *after* the saints have been escorted from judgment to glory, body and soul, to eternal glory,

there will be advancement and progression in happiness reserved for them, world without end. We think it will be admitted that much of the happiness of a future state will be derived from knowledge, and, although the knowledge of the spirits of just men is absolutely perfect in kind, it is in the highest degree probable that intercourse with Him, in whom are hid all its treasures, will improve and expand the intellectual capabilities; and that, after ages have passed away, the saints in light will be as much superior to themselves when they first entered into the kingdom, as their knowledge at that time in heaven was superior to their imperfect conceptions on earth. And if there be increase of knowledge at all, and advancement to higher and still higher degrees of perfection in other excellences, by the glorified in heaven, then the probability is that there is eternal progression, and consequently an increase of happiness for the saints in light, world without end.

The compound word "evermore," which occurs in that beautiful passage of the 16th Psalm, "At thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," has been interpreted by some in such a manner as to favor the doctrine of eternal increase of happiness, as well as the eternal duration of it, in heaven. According to the best lexicographers, the word "ever" literally signifies, always, never-ending; and the word "more" signifies,



in greater number, in greater quantity, in greater degree. And Dr. A. Clarke says, the original is well translated, "ever and more, onwardly, continually, perpetually, an eternal progression." But the doctrine of eternal progression is of too much importance to be allowed to rest, with all its incalculable consequences, on the somewhat doubtful interpretation of an isolated passage of Scripture; the force and chief strength of the argument in favor of it lie in analogy—in the nature of man and the goodness of God.

On this subject the Rev. J. Wesley observes, "There is not a more pleasing and triumphant consideration in religion than this of the perpetual progress of the soul toward the perfection of its nature, without ever arriving at a period in it." The Rev. W. Cooke says, "The most blessed in heaven are changing by accessions in knowledge and enjoyment, and a greater exaltation awaits them at the resurrection, to be succeeded by growing honors and accumulating blessedness for ever." The Rev. Dr. Dick avers, "We have no reason to doubt that the 'saints in light' will be perpetually acquiring new discoveries of the Divine glory, new prospects into the immensity of God's operations, new views of the rectitude and grandeur of his moral government, new accessions to their felicity, and new and transporting trains of thought, without the least interruption, as long as eternity endures." Similar senti-



ments were enunciated by the late Rev. Dr. Hamilton, of Leeds. He asserts, "There shall be in heaven ever-opening wells of delight. Nothing can be stationary in its knowledge or its bliss. It is a field for boundless meliorations. It is a track for onward footsteps. The song is a song of degrees. The heaven is a heaven of heavens!"

Who, then, can describe the unutterable bliss and ever-increasing happiness of the better land? Language cannot express it; figures cannot represent it; the most expressive epithets are worn threadbare in the attempt; the most striking symbols fail in the mighty effort. Every emblem that nature, or science, or art could furnish, has been used up without success; and every comparison which earth, or seas, or skies could suggest, has been employed in vain; fruits fail, and flowers fade; profusion is exhausted, and beauty withered; cornfields and meadows, woods and groves, verdant hills and fruitful vales, are all sterile deserts. Rivers, seas, and oceans of earth, are all empty; suns and moons, stars and skies, are dazzled into darkness; and imperial cities, palaces, thrones, and crowns, are all employed in vain in the attempt of mortals to represent the glory of the inheritance of the happy settlers in the promised land. All, all is beggared in the description of the Paradise of God. Matter and mind are spent, and, overwhelmed with the subject, fall down

in breathless prostration ; the sublimest conceptions of the mightiest intellects have been constrained to say :

“Thought, repress thy weak endeavor;  
Here must reason prostrate fall;  
O, the ineffable for ever!  
And the eternal all in all!”

And even inspired writers on this subject, after adding line to line, and epithet to epithet ; after heaping figure upon figure, and adding duration to duration ; after joining quantity to quality, and perpetuity of bliss to bliss, and changing from glory into glory, are constrained to confess, “it doth not *yet* APPEAR.” It does appear that there are fulness of joy, and joy everlasting, and, possibly, more and more pleasure for ever and ever.

It is probable, in the highest degree, that of the *increase* of our pleasures, of our peace, and love, and joy in heaven, there will be no end—that every successive moment of our happy existence will heighten the joy of our song—that we shall be changed from glory into glory, in higher and still higher degrees, “for evermore ;” and that, however excessive the glory, however various the springs of felicity, and however immeasurable the celestial joys that are vouchsafed to the spiritual emigrant on his arrival in the land of promise, the delightful probability is that all things, as he advances onward, and goes upward into the interior of the better

country, will be more abundant, transporting, and glorious, world without end, even for *ever* and *more*!

So that the period will arrive, in endless duration, when he shall not merely have overtaken the fire of the present Paul, and the love of the present John, and the strains of the present David, and excelled the sweetest of the sweet singers of the glorified Israel of God; but when he shall have gone beyond the glory of the present Gabriel, and exceeded the bliss of the Michael of ages beyond, and surpassed the highest attainments of cherubs, and outsung the sweetest seraphs of duration after duration farther still! For, if the blessedness of the redeemed in heaven be eternally progressive, there must come a period in duration without end, when the least of all saints in glory shall feel as much celestial joy and felicity as all the angels of God, and all the spirits of just men made perfect, put together, have enjoyed from the beginning until now. And if these representations were multiplied again, and again, and again, they would fall infinitely short of the reality: they would only show part of the joys, a glimpse of the glory, a drop of the immeasurable ocean of happiness prepared by Him who is "blessed for evermore," for them that love him. Beyond what mortals can speak, or think, of the immortal bliss of the happy settlers in the better country, "IT IS A FAR MORE EXCEEDING AND ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY!"

## CONCLUSION.

Now of the things of which we have spoken in the foregoing pages, this is the sum : "The present world" is not our rest : "The future state" is brought to light : "The better land" is sufficiently revealed for all the purposes of man's salvation : "The gracious Sovereign" is our Heavenly Father : "The generous natives" are our elder brethren : "The happy settlers" are our dearest friends : "The emigrant's Guide" is infallible inspiration : "The necessary preparation" is a holy nature : "The pleasant journey" may be performed by all : "The final departure" is always safe : "The abundant entrance" is immediately after death ; and the "glorious possession" is rich in quality, extensive in quantity, and perpetual in duration.

And now, dear reader, if you are still undecided, we once more most affectionately exhort you to leave spiritual Egypt, and emigrate to Canaan. By the mercies of God, by his justice, by his goodness and truth, by his long-suffering and readiness to forgive your past sins, we beseech you to repent and be converted. By the

love of Christ, by his humiliation in the stable, by his agony in the garden, and by his sufferings on the cross for you, we entreat you to believe the gospel. By the Holy Ghost, by his strivings with you, by his invitations to you, by his warnings, wooings, and promises, "we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." By the misery of sinners in life, by their terrors in death, by their condemnation in judgment, and by their eternal torments in hell, we would urge you to "flee from the wrath to come!" By the glories of heaven, the glorious place, the glorious state, the glorious exemptions, the glorious privileges, and the glorious prospects of the happy settlers in the better land, we would "allure to brighter worlds, and point the way." And what more shall we say? You live ill without Christ! You will die hardly without Christ! You will perish for ever without an interest in Christ! O come, then, to Christ! come to happiness! come to heaven! and come now!

Perhaps it is the eye of some poor wanderer from God and his people that is now on these pages; peradventure some poor Ephraim, who was once a pleasant child of God, is now in conversation with us: is it so? Are you a backslider? Have you been in the way to heaven? and are you again entangled with the yoke of bondage? Have you fallen from grace? Are you wounded and bruised by the sin of apostasy? And do you weep for your transgressions? Are you sorry for



your sin? Do you water your couch with your tears of contrition, and rise at midnight to pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner, and restore unto me the joy of thy salvation?" Our bowels yearn over you, and our heart bleeds at the thought of your perdition; and better bowels than ours are moved with compassion for you—a better heart than ours has bled for you—"Jesus weeps, and loves you still." Poor penitent prodigal, there is hope in Israel concerning thee! Yes, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel," though thy wound be deep, it is not incurable. There is BALM IN GILEAD. There is a PHYSICIAN THERE! There is yet a throne of grace! There is a fountain open still! There is redemption in Christ! Behold him! Return to him! trust in him!

"His bleeding heart shall make *thee* room—  
His open side shall take *THEE* in!"

There is not a sinner in the world whom he would pardon sooner than thee: he will heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely!

And if you have, long ago, set out for the better land, we repeat our exhortation, "Be thou faithful unto death." Go forward! press onward! reach upward! endure to the end, and heaven is yours for ever! Think of its delightful locality; its salubrious climate; its rich productions; its vast resources, and perfect security! Reflect on the indisputable citizenship! the immediate



admission! and the triumphal reception of the spiritual emigrant to the glory-regions! Calculate on the settler's welcome! the natives' greetings! and the Governor's blessing, that awaits you! Remember that perfect peace, perfect joy, perfect love, perfect purity, and perfect felicity are laid up in heaven for you! Consider that glorious immortality, glorious privileges, glorious society, glorious employment, and glorious possessions are in reserve for you. Paradise as it is, THE BETTER LAND, is prepared for you, *offered* to you! *promised* to you! GIVEN to YOU! Go up and possess it, and spend a glorious eternity there. AMEN and AMEN!

## THE SUNBRIGHT CLIME.

HAVE you heard, have you heard of the sunbright clime,  
Undimmed by sorrow, unhurt by time ;  
Where age hath no power o'er the fadeless frame,  
Where the eye is fire and the heart is flame—  
Have you heard of that sunbright clime ?

A river of water gushes there,  
'Mid flowers of beauty strangely fair,  
And a thousand forms are hovering o'er  
The golden waves and the dashing shore  
That are seen in that sunbright clime.

A million of forms all clothed in white,  
In garments of beauty clear and bright :  
They dwell in their own immortal bowers,  
'Mid fadeless hues of countless flowers,  
That bloom in that sunbright clime.

Ear hath not heard and eye hath not seen  
Their heavenly forms and their changeless sheen :  
Their ensigns they wave, and their banners unfurl,  
O'er the jasper walls and gates of pearl  
That are fixed in that sunbright clime.

But far, far away is that sinless clime,  
Undimmed by sorrow, unharmed by crime,  
Where 'mid all things that are fair is given  
The home of the just, and its name is Heaven—  
That's the name of that sunbright clime.

THE END.













